CPUC aims to start rate regulation work in Jan. PAGE 2
In Memoriam ceremony honors CNMI's WWII dead. PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 214

www.saipantribune.com | FRIDAY OCTOBER 27, 2023 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

Retirees' 25% not included in FY '24 budget

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tang

The CNMI government has not included in its fiscal year 2024 budget the 25% voluntary payment for retiree benefits that the CNMI government has been paying since the Inos administration, according to Settlement Fund trustee Joyce C.H. Tang.

In her report to the federal government, Tang said the CNMI's budget for fiscal 2024 did not allocate any money for the 25% voluntary retiree

See RETIREES on Page 4

TO RECOVER SUSPENDED GAMING LICENSE

IPI proposes $6M yearly payment

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Howyo Chi, the newly appointed manager/director for Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, talks about IPI's proposal during the CCC board's monthly meeting yesterday at the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai. IPI proposes to pay annually a total of $6 million to the CNMI government and Commonwealth Casino Commission in exchange for getting back its suspended casino license.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is proposing to pay $5 million a year for four years to the CNMI government for the casino license fee and

See IPI on Page 4

Gas down 10 cents again

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI continues to see a drop in fuel prices with Mobil Oil Marianas leading the way with a 10-cent drop in its fuel prices.

As usual, Mobil Oil Marianas was the first to drop their prices but Shell Marianas is

See GAS on Page 4

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
Local oil companies have dropped their prices anew by 10 cents

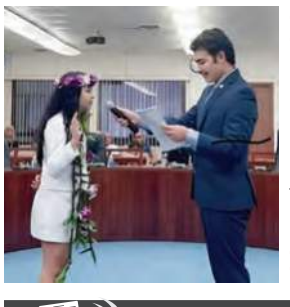
Flores leads PSS in honoring public school principals

Interim Education commissioner Donna M. Flores led education leaders in honoring and praising all 20 public school principals throughout the Commonwealth during last

See FLORES on Page 4

PSS
Interim Education commissioner Donna M. Flores, center, back side, led school district leaders on Wednesday in honoring all 20 elementary, middle, and high school principals of the Public School System during a professional development at the Pacific Islands Club. October is National Principals Month.

INSIDE



LOCAL
Last Saturday Soledad Maria Tudela Sablan became the newest member of the 19th CNMI Youth Congress.
PAGE 7

BUSINESS
McDonald's Saipan will be hosting its first-ever Halloween Kids Costume Contest at its Chalan Laulau location this Sunday, Oct. 29.
PAGE 15

WORLD
Israeli troops and tanks launched a brief ground raid into northern Gaza overnight into Thursday.
PAGE 16

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

McDonald's® of Saipan
HALLOWEEN
KIDS COSTUME CONTEST
WINNERS GET A
$30 ARCH CARD
October 29
3 pm
McD Chalan Laulau
Scan to register
or call (670) 235-8761
Categories: McDonald's®, Most Creative, Funniest
See store for complete details, limited number of entries, all contestants win a prize
Happy Meal® Boo Buckets now available! While supplies last.
©2023 McDonald's

Local

Probable cause found to try habitual offender accused of molesting minor

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has found probable cause to try a habitual offender accused of molesting a minor.

Fitial

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan has recently found probable cause to try repeat offender Tyron Reyes F. Fitial who is accused of molesting a minor.

Fitial is currently facing charges of sexual abuse of a minor in the third degree, and disturbing the peace.

"The court finds probable cause to believe that the crimes of sexual abuse of a minor in the third degree as charged in Count I of the Information, and disturbing the peace as charged in Count II of the Information were committed and finds probable cause that defendant committed said offenses. Defendant is therefore held to answer said charges.

Following the hearing, Fitial was remanded back to Department of Corrections custody pending further court proceedings.

During the hearing, the CNMI was represented by Chief Prosecutor Chester Hinds while Fitial was represented by assistant public defender Charlene W. Brown.

During the hearing, detective Jhaneeka Jewruelle Taitano Atalig of the Criminal Investigation Division of Department of Public Safety testified before the court.

According to the complaint against Fitial, he sexually touched a minor last Oct. 7.

The minor told forensic investigators that in the early morning of Oct. 7, while she was sleeping in the living room, she woke up to find that Fitial was touching her inappropriately.

She said Fitial told her she had a nice body and not to tell her sister.

She added that she was scared and stayed up to wait for her older sister to get ready for work.

In the morning, the minor said her sister and Fitial dropped her off at a relative's house where she said she told her nephew about the incident. The nephew then told his grandfather who called for police assistance.

Fitial is a former detention guard at the Juvenile Detention Unit who pleaded guilty back in 2011 to enticing a minor, but not actual sexual penetration.

In 2012, Fitial was sentenced by the U.S. District Court for the NMI to serve 15 years imprisonment for enticing a 12-year-old girl detained at the former Kagman Juvenile Detention and Correctional Facility to meet with him and engage in sexual activity.

Following this, the Office of the Attorney General filed in the Superior Court 11 criminal charges against Fitial over the same incident.

In 2013, the Superior Court sentenced Fitial to 15 years imprisonment for the same charges. The local court sentence ran concurrently with the federal sentence.

CPUC aims to start rate regulation work in Jan.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Public Utilities Commission aims to begin its actual work of regulating utilities this January, according to CPUC chair James S. Sirok, who attended the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board meeting on Wednesday.

In an interview during a break in the CUC meeting, Sirok said they haven't done any utility decision-making as they are in the process of hiring staff and officers, getting offices, and getting some money.

"So that's what we're dealing with now—just the actual administrative business," said Sirok, adding they will get into the actual rate regulating business once these are done.

He said they will probably be ready to start doing some dockets in January.

Right now, Sirok said, they are in the process of getting an office as they don't have a designated one.

He said the CPUC board already had a couple of meetings and will, in fact, meet

See CPUC on Page 4

WUSHIN
BE SAFETY FOR YOUR FAMILY
LP GAS
WUSHIN
Since1983
Committed to Safety Excellence
For your LPGas needs, please call 322-7415 or 322-8733
Open from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday | 8:00am – 2:00pm Saturday

VISION OF LUXURY

LEXUS
EXPERIENCE AMAZING

Features include: Backup Camera, Blind Spot Monitor, Fog Lights, Hands Free Liftgate, Interior Accents, Lane Departure Warning, Navigation System, Push Start, Remote Start, Side-Impact Bags, Sunroof/Moonroof

THE 2023
LEXUS RX

SHOP ONLINE
AKSAIPAN.COM

FLORES

From page 1

Wednesday's culmination of PSS' Principals Month Celebration.

Flores reminded everyone that school principals perform the very demanding task of ensuring day in and day out that they are accountable for the best education of each student and create the school's tone. This is on top of decision-making in staff hiring and recruitment and student curriculum.

"I have been with you all for almost 14 years and have had the pleasure of building a work relationship with each of you as counterparts in our respective roles. And these past two months, I had the opportunity to view you from a different lens, and I can honestly say my perception has come full circle in terms of the gratitude I hold for the care and commitment you have for the staff and students we serve, while oftentimes, going unrecognized, underrecognized or even acknowledged for what you do," she said in her remarks. Most of the time, the 1% wrong overshadows the 99 % right, which is sometimes a fact of life for many of us. At any rate, you all deserve a round of applause for what you do and for why you do what you do."

Flores also conveyed the appreciation of Board of Education chair Antonio L. Borja to all school administrators. "Our chairman…says 'thank you for all your sacrifices, for what you do for our children and our schools.'"

There are 20 public school principals throughout the islands. The elementary school principals are Raena Camacho (Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School); Derwin Johnson (Garapan Elementary School); Dr. Ignacia Demapan (Kagman Elementary School); Paulette Tomokane (San Vicente Elementary School); Jasylene Parico (Oleai Elementary School); Lou Connie Manglona (Tinian Elementary School); Daisy Quitugua (Sinapalo Elementary School); Naomi Nishimura (Koblerville Elementary School); and Dr. Lyn Mendiola (William S. Reyes Elementary School).

The middle school principals are Carla Sablan (Chacha Oceanview Middle School), James Sablan (Dandan Middle School); Hilda Rios (Tanapag Middle School), Cherlyn Osung (Francisco M. Sablan Middle School), and Victorino Borja (Hopwood Middle School).

The high school principals are Liz Perzinski (Tinian High School and Tinian Middle School); Annette Calvo (Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior/ Senior High School); Vince Dela Cruz (Saipan Southern High School); Ben Jones Jr. (Kagman High School), Jonathan Aguon (Marianas High School), and Christine Tudela (Da'ok Academy).

In addition to the professional criteria of all public school principals in the CNMI, Flores said there are eight other qualities these principals possess to be able to accomplish and succeed.

She then individually praised all 20 elementary, middle, and high school principals and cited examples of those exemplifying these eight qualities that make for an effective principal.

"Although you all fall into more than one of these eight qualities, I'm going to call you out with the ones that I immediately attached to you too (what comes to mind first), and I beg your indulgence with this introduction," she said.

Leadership quality

Chacha Oceanview Middle School principal Carla Sablan was praised for taking on the interim role as principal "when we needed someone to step up for a period of time."

Dandan Middle School principal James Sablan was also recognized for being "supportive of staff and taking responsibility for all his actions."

Communication skills

Francisco M. Sablan Middle School principal Cherlyn Cabrera Osung and Hopwood Middle School principal Victorino Borja were both praised for leading their school's effective response to school threats.

Vision

Flores said WSR Elementary School principal Dr. Lynn Mendiola was honored for being a future-ready school leader who sets the bar high for staff recognition.

Kagman Elementary School principal Dr. Ignacia Demapan was recognized as a lifelong learner who is able to adjust to the new trends in education and learning.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

IPI

From page 1

$1 million per year for four years to the Commonwealth Casino Commission for regulatory fee, in exchange for getting back its suspended casino license.

Speaking at the CCC board's monthly meeting yesterday, Howyo Chi, the newly appointed IPI manager/director, told the commissioners that they will pay the same $6 million or more in the second, third, and fourth year.

Chi said they're still hoping to continue to operate in the CNMI and they are proposing making the seven-figure payment within a week to the CNMI and CCC.

In turn, he said, they're asking for a transitional period of two to four years to get this global settlement of all their obligations taken cared of so that they can pay the CNMI and CCC partial payment and then they can work on getting their license back.

The CCC board ordered the indefinite suspension of IPI's gaming license in April 2021 for violating the commission's orders in five enforcement actions.

Chi said that, with their casino license suspended, it's tough for them right now to resume operations. He said the casino license suspension has caused fairly significant damage to IPI Holdings. The trading of IPI Holdings' stock in Hong Kong has been suspended because of the casino license suspension and so they cannot do any fundraising.

He said their proposal is to pay a good chunk of money to the CNMI, and they are asking for this transitional period where IPI can have its license back, while they work on a global settlement that satisfies all parties involved.

To resolve all these issues, he said, they are willing to make payments so the CCC can hire its staff back and IPI can resume operations and they can work on a payment plan.

Cho said IPI's proposal was contained in a letter that he signed and sent to CCC board chair Edward C. DeLeon Guerrero on Oct. 23, 2023, in response to the original letter received from the chairman regarding IPI's settlement terms.

He said the chairman asked IPI to not only pay the full amount that is due, but also to give up the exclusivity of the casino license.

Chi said IPI management felt that this offer was negotiated in bad faith and that it was not something that can be completed.

He disclosed that the CCC's initial settlement offer that was presented to IPI was payment of the full $36 million and the loss of casino exclusivity.

"That does not reduce any of IPI's liabilities when you ask us to pay $36 million and lose license exclusivity," Chi said.

He said that once the $18 million is paid, IPI will lose its casino license exclusivity and IPI has to pay another $18 million to reach a global settlement.

"That was the original initial settlement offer. That is why IPI felt like that offer was completely in bad faith negotiation when you are saying that we have to lose our exclusivity and pay an amount for two years upfront, even just one $18 million just to have a chance for negotiation," Chi said.

He said they are prepared to make a payment to have the commission give them a transitional period of two to four years so that IPI can get its license back to resume operations so the investors that they partner with can come in and finish the building so they can continue pay their obligations, taxes, and agreed-upon fees.

Chi said this transitional period will give them a little bit of time to resume operations so that an investor could come in and help them hire people back, provide jobs for locals, and stimulate the economy.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CPUC

From page 2

again tomorrow, Saturday, at 9:30am, at the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority conference room. He said the public is welcome to attend the meeting.

"You can come in and you'll understand what's going on and where we're at. But we're trying to gear up slowly… and…we have to take some baby steps," he said.

Sirok said one of the reasons why he attends the CUC board meeting is because he wants to have a dialogue with the board members to sort of talk about where the CPUC is and what they're going to do.

Sirok is a former legal counsel for CUC.

He said there are still matters that are pending or have been on the table since 2016 that the CPUC will still have to deal with these matters and that's what he will be discussing with the CUC board.

The House of Representatives and the Senate confirmed the appointments of Sirok and former Northern Marianas College academic administrator Dr. John "Jack" Angello last June to serve as members of the CPUC, representing Saipan and Northern Islands.

The other commission members are former Rota High School principal Oscar Patrick Quitugua and former Saipan representative Ramon S. Basa. The Tinian position is vacant.

The CPUC is an independent commission established by the Legislature many years ago to regulate utilities in the CNMI.

GAS

From page 1

expected to follow suit today. The two companies typically mirror each other's price adjustments.

With this latest decrease in prices, Mobil now charges $5.46 per gallon of Extra fuel; it used to charge $5.56. Mobil also dropped its Supreme fuel prices from $6.01 to $5.91 while diesel went from $6.18 to $6.08.

Fuel prices have only continued to drop since the end of September.

Earlier this month oil companies dropped fuel prices from $5.66 per gallon to $5.56.

Prior to that, oil companies dropped regular fuel prices from $5.76 per gallon to $5.66.

The downtrend came after a string of increases in the last few months.

The first increase was seen back on July 19. After more than two months of steady fuel prices, Mobil Oil Marianas broke the streak with a 15-cent increase. Regular fuel went up from $5.11 per gallon to $5.26 per gallon.

Less than a week after, on July 25, Shell Marianas surprised the CNMI community when it took the lead in implementing a 10-cent increase that brought regular fuel prices up from $5.26 per gallon to $5.36.

Again, less than a week after, on Aug. 2, gas went up 15 cents. With the previous increase, fuel went up from $5.36 per gallon to $5.51.

Following the Aug. 2 increase, local oil companies raised their prices again in a little over two weeks by 5 cents, with fuel increasing from $5.51 per gallon to $5.56.

After over a week, local oil companies raised prices again by 10 cents, from $5.56 per gallon to $5.66.

Soon after, local oil companies raised their prices again by 10 cents, bringing regular fuel up from $5.66 to $5.76 per gallon.

RETIREES

From page 1

benefit payment, which means Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and the Legislature will need to determine whether the government can find a funding source for the 25% benefit payments. Without it, the CNMI's retirees will only be receiving the mandated 75% of their pensions.

"The government has voluntarily made the 25% benefit payments under the Settlement Agreement through Oct. 15, 2023. The current [fiscal] 2024 CNMI budget did not provide for 25% benefit payments. Without provision in the [fiscal] 2024 CNMI budget for the 25% benefit payments equal to $12.2 million, there does not appear to be funding available to cover the 25% benefit payment," said Tang.

Also, Tang said the CNMI's 2024 budget does not fully cover certain programs like the Group Health and Life Insurance Program for retirees.

Since 2014, pursuant a Settlement Agreement between the CNMI government and local retirees (which essentially established what is known today as the NMI Settlement Fund), the CNMI government has been making a 25% voluntary benefit payment to the Settlement Fund on top of its 75% minimum annual payments.

Together, the minimum annual payments and the voluntary benefit payment make up 100% of what is paid out to local retirees.

Retiree Betty Johnson sued the CNMI government in 2009 for its failure to pay the amounts it was required by law to pay to the Retirement Fund since 2005.

Johnson said the Fund would run out of money by June 2014 and would no longer be able to pay retirement benefits.

In September 2013, the parties agreed to settle the lawsuit and the federal court approved a $779-million consent judgment in case the CNMI government did not meet its obligations to the Settlement Fund.

The CNMI government committed to pay at least 75% of the retirees' benefits.

To date, the CNMI government has been compliant with the settlement agreement.

Based on Tang's report, the CNMI government has fulfilled its obligation by making it minimum annual payment or MAP of $36 million in fiscal 2023.

The settlement agreement also requires the CNMI government to pay an alternative payment of a greater amount or APGA equal to the difference of 17% of the government's total annual revenue after deducting the amount of the MAP.

To date, APGAs were paid for 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 totalling $36.29 million.

The last APGA payment was made in 2017 during the peak of the casino industry on Saipan and APGA payments will not be due for 2020, 2021, 2022 or 2023 due to the CNMI financial struggles.

HALLOWEEN CANDIES

20% off

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES & ACCESSORIES

30% off

HALLOWEEN PARTY SUPPLIES

30% off

ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS

25% off

BEDSHEETS

25% off

HOUSEWARE PRODUCTS

25% off

ELECTRONICS

25% off

HANDBAGS & WALLETS

25% off

GIRLS DRESSES & SETS

25% off

KITCHENWARE

25% off

LADIES CLOTHING & APPAREL

25% off

MENS CLOTHING & APPAREL

25% off

NAIL CARE/POLISH

25% off

PARTY FAVORS

25% off

SHOES & SANDALS

25% off

JOETEN 4 DAY HALLOWEEN SALE

SATURDAY TO TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28 TO 31, 2023

US CHICKEN LEG QUARTERS 20 LBS

$16.99/cs.

US CHICKEN LEG QUARTERS 10 LBS BAG

$8.74

CAL BISTRO US GROUND BEEF TUBE 73% LEAN 1 LB

$4.74

US PORK CHOPS FAMILY BAG 7 LBS

$17.99

US PORK BUTTS STEAK BONELESS FAMILY BAG 8 LBS

$19.99

DIAMOND G CALROSE RICE 5 LBS

$5.99

ACE OF DIAMONDS TUNA 7oz

$1.99 ea.

HAWAIIAN SUN DRINKS 12pk

$9.99

DOGPRO TRUE VALUE DOG FOOD 44 LBS

$39.99

JOETEN BUTANE GAS 4pk

$24.99/cs.

GROCERY/MARKET ITEMS

JELLO PUDDING PISTACHIO 3.4oz

$1.99

BADIA GARLIC RED CHILI PEPPER 32oz

$6.99

U.S. TAMARIND 1LB

$4.99

KRAFT BBQ SAUCE SWT HONEY 18z
KRAFT SPICY HONEY BBQ SAUCE 18z
KRAFT BBQ SCE HICKORY SMK 17.5oz

$3.19 ea.

ORTEGA YELLOW TACO SHELLS 12ct

$3.79

BEAR BRAND MILK CHOCO 900g

$9.99

U.S. PUMPKINS MINI/BABY WHITE / LB
U.S. PUMPKINS MINI - ORANGE / LB
U.S. ORNAMENTAL GOURDS / LB

$3.99/lb.

LUCIA DRIED TARO LEAVES 114g

$1.79

COFFEEMATE PEPPERMINT MOCHA CREAMER 32z

$6.49

DAISY SOUR CREAM ORIGINAL 16z

$3.69

HORMEL PARTY TRAY HARD SALAMI & PEPPERONI 1.75#

$16.99

TORTILLALAND UNCOOKED FLOUR TORTILLA 20z

$4.59

LA TORTILLA WHITE CORN TORTILLA 8ct
LA TORTILLA YELLOW CORN TORTILLA 8ct

$4.39

BEEF SHORTRIBS THIN SLICE

$7.99/lb.

SHRIMP 16-20 BT HOSO 1LB

$7.99

Joeten Shopping Center

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

Although Joeten strives to ensure that all pricing information on this ad is accurate, occasionally an error may occur and goods may be mispriced. We reserve the right to correct all typographical and pictorial errors.

P.O. Box 500137 Saipan, MP 96950 • Tel. 234-6446/48 • Fax. 234-5876
Visit our 4-Branches: Joeten Susupe, Garapan, Dandan and Kagman

AMERICAN EXPRESS VISA MasterCard JCB

WE WELCOME FOOD STAMPS.
WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO LIMIT QUANTITIES

GUANGDONG HARDWARE
Never satisfied until you are
ON SALE
REGULAR US LUMBER, RED PLYFORM, "24X24" CERAMIC TILES, PVC S40 CONDUIT, PVC S80 WATER FITTINGS,
AVAILABLE NOW
SALE ITEMS!

Make a Difference for Your House!

NEW ARRIVALS!
CARPOLY PAINT
It's the suitable paint for the island climate. Make your paint last for a long time!

1 FREE T-shirt with one time purchase of two buckets of
CARPOLY
Professional Paint Solution Provider
First Come First Served, While Stocks Last
LED LIGHTS
• Less money, 50% energy saving!
• More stable, bright, and fashionable!
• More longer and environmental protection!
Your Smart Choice!
G60 Rebar is Available Now!
CHEAPEST DEALER OF MAJOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL ON ISLAND!
P.O. BOX 501640, SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL: (670) 288-2288/2289/6688
FAX: 288-4488
E-mail:guangdong_hardware@163.com
BUSINESS HOURS:
Monday to Saturday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Carmen C. Pangelinan, Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council secretary; Marian DLG. Tudela, council chair; Barbara Alberti, park superintendent; and Tonie M. Tudela, council vice chair.

NEARLY 80 YEARS AFTER WWII

In Memoriam ceremony honors NMI's WWII dead

Today at 4pm, the 17th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, in cooperation with American Memorial Park on Saipan, is set for the return of its annual In Memoriam commemorative remembrance, blessing, and meditative ceremony for nearly a thousand Chamorros and Carolinian civilians who perished during the fierce Battle of Saipan nearly 80 years ago in June 1944.

The Marianas Memorial Monument was completed on June 13, 2004, a project organized by then-governor Juan N. Babauta when he was a representative in Washington, D.C. Babauta was also responsible for the commemorative recognition of 50 Marianas Marine Scouts who served in the U.S. Marines as scouts after the war.

Babauta, together with then-Saipan mayor Juan B. Tudela, was joined by then-bishop Thomas A. Camacho and Fr. Isaac Ayuyu for the Mass of remembrance, after which Babauta attended the ceremony at Marianas Memorial along with then-Youth Congress speaker Alvin "Champ" Fejeran, who recited the 933 names etched on the granite tombstone.

Veterans, government officials, families, relatives, friends and other members of the community joined the commemorative fellowship and remembrance at American Memorial Park early Sunday morning 20 years ago in 2004, to witness the unveiling of the first granite edifice honoring the civilian Chamorro and Carolinian lives lost in the Battle of Saipan during World War II in 1944.

Ten years after the unveiling in 2004, the 12th Saipan Municipal Council held its first In Memoriam ceremony in October 2014, then in succeeding years except in 2018 due to Super Typhoon Yutu, returned in 2019, and was postponed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. A similar event was hosted by the American Memorial Park in October 2022.

This year sees the return of the In Memoriam ceremony with the 17th municipal council leadership as host, in cooperation with American Memorial Park and the CNMI and municipal leadership.

In a public statement, council chair Marian DLG Tudela, vice chair Tonie M. Tudela and secretary Carmen C. Pangelinan are inviting families, relatives, friends, and members of the Commonwealth community to participate in today's one-hour In Memoriam commemoration.

Today's ceremony kicks off at 4pm at the American Memorial Park. ***(PR)***

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
FIVE (5) WELDERS

DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:
Read and understand blueprints; Source required materials to be used in projects; Measure and cut materials to specifications using hand and power tools common to the welding trade, such as shielded metal arc and gas metal arc welding equipment; Select and install torches, torch tips, filler rods, and flux, according to welding chart specifications or types and thicknesses of metals; Determine required equipment and welding methods, applying knowledge of metallurgy, geometry, and welding techniques; Monitor the fitting, burning, and welding processes to avoid overheating of parts or warping, shrinking, distortion, or expansion of material; Grind, cut, buff, or bend edges of workpieces to be joined to ensure snug fit, using power grinders and hand tools; Weld separately or in combination, using aluminum, stainless steel, cast iron, and other alloys; Chip or grind off excess weld, slag, or spatter, using hand scrapers or power chippers, portable grinders, or arc-cutting equipment; Develop templates and models for welding projects, using mathematical calculations based on blueprint information; Repair products by dismantling, straightening, reshaping, and reassembling parts, using cutting torches, straightening presses, and hand tools; Perform other related duties as assigned.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS:
• High School Diploma/GED or foreign equivalent is acceptable;
• Applicants must be able to provide qualifying certifications for U.S. Standard of Practice; and
• Minimum of three (3) years-experience in fuel tank welding with SMAW and TIG 6G Processes.

WORKING CONDITIONS:
• Flexible hours that include evenings & weekends not to exceed 40/hrs. a week; &
• Travel within the islands of the CNMI (Rota & Tinian) and the Territory of Guam to perform the job duties at constructions sites where Employer's services are required or have been contracted.

Interested individuals please send your resume with a list of references, photocopy of a valid photo identification card & updated police clearance to:

Shawn Curtis Holt, General Manager
General Asia Pacific Construction, LLC
World War II Lane, Garapan
PMB 430 Box 10001
Saipan, MP 96950
Contact no. 1 (541) 704-8364
E-mail: shawn.holt@gapconfuels.com

WE ARE AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

CARGO EXPRESS INC.
JOB VACANCY
Accounting Manager

Qualifications:
• Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy
• Minimum of five (5) years of professional accounting experience with a strong background in data analysis.
• Knowledgeable in Peachtree/ Sage Accounting, Quickbooks Software & MS Office Apps

Email Resume: ceispn@cargoexpressi.com or
Visit our office at Lower Base Drive, Lower Base, Saipan
Office Hours / Days: 8am – 5pm / Monday – Friday

SAIPAN MAYOR'S OFFICE
PRESENTS
A SPOOKTACULAR HALLOW'S EVE!
OCTOBER 31, 2023 – 5:30 P.M. TO 8:30 P.M.
OR WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!
SUGAR KING PARK, GARAPAN
Participating Partners
Alpha Kappa RHO
Bantalan Sugar Dock Incorporated
Delia's CUP
Marianas Association of Filipino Engineers and Architects
MPACC
Pacific Basin Insurance
Saipan Magalahi Eagles Club
Saipan Eagles Lions Club
NO TRICKS, JUST TREATS!

Sablan: I will have your best interests at heart

» SIS junior becomes newest senator of 19th Youth Congress

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New Youth Congress senator Soledad "Somie" T. Sablan of Saipan International School (center) is joined by House acting speaker Joel C. Camacho (second right), Rep. Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao (third right), and Rep. Thomas John "T.J." Manglona, along with family and her fellow senators after being sworn in to the 19th CNMI Youth Congress.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Youth Congress speaker Vinnie Juan Q. Sablan (Kagman High School) swears in Soledad "Somie" T. Sablan of Saipan International School to serve as a Youth Congress senator during the latter's swearing-in during the 19th Youth Congress' fourth regular session.

ARMATECH
PABX Telephone System Installer

Tel: (670) 234-8895 I Email: armatech.saipan@gmail.com
Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New Youth Congress senator Soledad "Somie" T. Sablan of Saipan International School (center) is flanked by her colleagues after swearing-in during the 19th Youth Congress' fourth regular session. From left, senator Aden H. Calvo (Rita H. Inos Jr.-Sr. High School), senator Ysabella V. Palacios (Tinian Jr.-Sr. High School), senator Ayden C. Yumul (Grace Christian Academy), speaker Vinnie Juan Q. Sablan (Kagman High School), senator Maili B. Peter (Mount Carmel School), vice speaker Peaches Fiona Bayot (Marianas High School), and senator Mickyiel B. Cabrera (Saipan Southern High School).

Last Saturday in the presence of family, friends, and community leaders, Soledad Maria Tudela Sablan, an 11th grader at Saipan International School, became the newest member of the 19th CNMI Youth Congress during the body's fourth regular session held at the House Chamber of the Hon. Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building on Capital Hill.

Taking the oath of office from Youth Congress speaker Vinnie Juan Q. Sablan (Kagman High School), Sablan will serve out the term originally held by former youth senator Filomenaleonisa M.T. Iakopo, who was elected during the Youth Congress elections held last March.

Sablan is the daughter of Jason and Shirley Sablan.

She is also the granddaughter of former Senate president and lieutenant governor Jesus R. and Annie T. Sablan and former Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director and board member Roman I. and Ana M. Tudela. Among the members of the Legislature who witnessed the ceremony were acting House speaker Joel Camacho, Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao, and Rep. Thomas John "T.J." Manglona.

In addressing the crowd gathered, the new senator expressed excitement on her new task, and a willingness to grow while on the job. "I am the newcomer of the group, the amateur, the freshwoman—but I am a fast-learner and excited to continue the work, " said Sablan in a statement given following the signing of her oath of office.

In her remarks, she also thanked her predecessor for her can-do spirit and invaluable contributions to the body in the early months of

See SIS on Page 8

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New Youth Congress senator Soledad "Somie" T. Sablan of Saipan International School (center) poses for a photo with her parents and grandparents after her swearing-in during the 19th CNMI Youth Congress' fourth regular session. From left, mother Shirley T. Sablan, grandmother Ana M. Tudela, her brother Jose, grandmother Annie T. Sablan, grandfather former Senate president and lieutenant governor Jesus R. Sablan, and father Jason T. Sablan.

UNLIMITED
Flow
FOR ALL
UP TO 5 LINES AS LOW AS $160/mo
Unlimited Postpaid Talk | Text | Data
Unlimited Plus
$50/mo
• Unlimited talk, text & data
• 20GB/mo. mobile hotspot
• Lightning-fast 5G
• Multi-line discounts
• dTV+ Lite add-on available for purchase
Unlimited Premier
$70/mo
• Unlimited talk, text & data
• Unlimited long distance voice and SMS to the U.S.
• Unlimited mobile hotspot
• Includes 5GB data roaming in Japan, Korea, Philippines & U.S.
• Lightning-fast 5G
• Multi-line discounts
dTV+ Lite
Plus, priority access to the latest handset devices!
Unlimited Add-On
$30/mo
• Unlimited talk, text & data
• Lightning-fast 5G
• Multi-line discounts
2 LINES AS LOW AS $72.50/mo
670-488-CARE | docomopacific.com
*Prices and inclusions subject to change at any time. Excludes taxes, fees and surcharges. New activations subject to credit checks. All mobile service subscriptions must adhere to DOCOMO PACIFIC's Wireless Fair Use Policy. Full terms and conditions available at www.docomopacific.com/about-us/terms-and-conditions.
docomo pacific
Better Together

NORTHERN MARIANAS HUMANITIES COUNCIL

Board Vacancy Announcement

CNMI residents are invited to express their interest in serving as a Board member for the Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council). The Council is a non-profit, private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities whose mission is to navigate and explore the human experiences of the indigenous and diverse peoples of the Commonwealth by enriching their lives through research, dialogue, programs, and publications.

The Council's Board is comprised of thirteen volunteer members who serve three-year terms. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our CNMI community and consider the following factors: humanities expertise, fiscal and fundraising expertise, geographical coverage, demographic diversity, and attendance at a post-secondary institution. The ideal candidate will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities and to actively participate in fundraising activities. Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually;
- Raising funds for Council programs;
- Recruiting community partners;
- Promoting awareness about the Council's mission and its programs in the community;
- Attending Council programs and activities;
- Participating in working committee meetings;
- Evaluating Council programs and activities;
- Reviewing grant applications;
- Providing input about the humanities from various community members, and
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings on behalf of the Council.

Applicants are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Dr. Bobby J.A. Cruz, Chair**, Northern Marianas Humanities Council at Post Office Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950, delivered to the Council's office located in the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Saipan, or via email to: info@nmhcouncil.org. For additional information, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Leo Pangelinan, at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at www.nmhcouncil.org.

SIS

From page 7

the term. In addressing the challenges facing our community affecting the Commonwealth's youth, Sablan said, "There are many issues that we as members of our community are confronted with on a daily basis. We see opportunities for improvement in education, healthcare, sports and fitness, the environment, etc. There will never be a universal approach to addressing every issue and to finding ways to do things better, but through a democratic process and a diplomatic approach, we will all find satisfaction because at the end of the day we will get it done!" Sablan cited her work with such student organizations as the CNMI Speech & Debate Team and SIS Rotary Interact Club as inspiration for her to accept the appointment, using the Rotary Clubs motto of service above self as the driving force of her work in office.

In addressing her colleagues, Sablan thanked them for helping orient her on their past and future projects for the term and for their desire to leave the Marianas better than they found it, "If there is one thing I sense in this group, it is that we all hunger to improve our standard of living. We all want what's best for the person to our right and to our left. We all know that when the going gets tough, the tough will have to get going and we will rise above every occasion because that is what we were all elected to do."

Along with thanking her family and school administrators, Sablan also thanked her fellow Geckos for, "entrusting me with this position and for giving me the opportunity to be your voice in (the Youth) Congress. I will always have your best interests at heart."

During the public comments section of the session, acting Speaker Camacho congratulated Sen. Sablan and expressed looking forward to working with her in her time as a youth senator.

In a congratulatory letter sent prior to her swearing-in, speaker Vinnie Juan Q. Sablan expressed to senator Sablan, "I am more than confident that you will bring about so many positive contributions and growth to our community. Your role as a senator carries with it great responsibility, and I have no doubt that you will serve the youth of the Marianas and work efficiently with honor, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to the well-being and future of our young citizens."

On top of that, during session the Youth Congress speaker expressed confidence that his new colleague will work diligently in collaboration with the other seven members who make up the Youth Congress.

"As you embark on this new journey, I have no doubt that your wisdom, integrity, and hard work will shine through helping to empower, encourage, and advocate for the youth of our Commonwealth. I look forward to witnessing the positive impact you will have on our community and for our youth," said senator Ayden Sean C. Yumul (Grace Christian Academy).

Tinian Jr.-Sr. High School's senator Ysabella Palacios congratulated Sablan by saying, "Judging by what I've heard and what all of your other colleagues have said about you, I just know that you will do such a great job."

Senator Mickyiel Josh B. Cabrera of Saipan Southern High School expressed his and his constituents' congratulations and well-wishes to Senator Sablan.

The CNMI Youth Congress was created through Public Law 8-27 authored by the late vice speaker Jesus P. Mafnas, and was later repealed and re-enacted by Public Law 17-22. Its purpose is to prepare the CNMI's youth for the challenges of the future, giving them the power to create policy aimed at bettering the lives of their peers through legislation. Since the inception of the Youth Congress, six youth senators have been elected to public office, with four elected to the House of Representatives, one to the Senate, and one elected mayor.

In the six months since the 19th Youth Congress senators have been in office, they have introduced three bills, adopted 12 resolutions, organized community outreach and donation events, and have discussed issues at the table with their counterparts in the Legislature, and agencies such as the Saipan Mayor's Office, the Office of Youth Affairs, the CNMI Public School System, and various central government agencies. ***(Youth Congress)***

79 years of turning flour
and sugar into happiness!
Happy Anniversary,
Herman's Modern Bakery.
HERMAN'S MODERN BAKERY
Saipan's First and Finest
79
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY
HERMAN'S MODERN BAKERY, INC
ESTABLISHED 1944
J.E.T. HOLDINGS COMPANY
DBA'S SAIPAN BOWLING CENTER • COMMERCIAL BUILDING & HOUSE RENTAL
CONSULTING SERVICES & RENTAL ESTATES
J'S RESTAURANT I-SAN JOSE • J'S RESTAURANT II-GUALO RAI
P.O. BOX 29, SAIPAN MP 96950 • TEL. 235-8641 • FAX 235-9033
Beach Road, San Jose
Tel. 234-6420
Middle Road, Gualo Rai
Tel. 235-8640
Unlimited expressions for lasting impression
For Fresh Flowers, Silk Arrangement and Gift Basket Arrangement. Please visit Blossoms Floral Shop or call 235-7372/235-2276

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special meeting is being called on Tuesday, October 31, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. at the Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM(S):
1. Reorganization of the Board - Election of Chairman
2. Report on the Status of Executive Director Position

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed)

V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom.
Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

RAMON A. TEBUTEB
Acting Chairman, Board of Directors

UOG

The UOG Marketing & Communications team and UOG Web Team hold the awards they received for projects completed in 2021 at the University of Guam 70th Anniversary Exhibit in August 2022 at the Guam Museum. From left, team members at the time included Laura Pangelinan, Jackie Hanson, Bernie Capindo, Chief Marketing & Communications officer Jonas Macapinlac, Gene Herrera, Eurich Patacsil, and Matt Raymundo.

UOG Marketing team named finalist in 2023 AMA award

The University of Guam is a finalist for the American Marketing Association Foundation's Higher Education Marketer of the Year Team Award, the AMA informed UOG recently.

The AMA Higher Education Marketing Awards honor extraordinary leadership and celebrate innovation and achievement in higher education marketing.

The UOG Marketing and Communications team was recognized for its work in 2022, when it piloted digital marketing campaigns and promoted the University's 70th Anniversary celebration which culminated in an award-winning museum exhibit.

The team's digital marketing campaigns recently won Internet Advertising Awards, National Association of Government Communicators awards, and a Circle of Excellence Bronze Award from Council for the Advancement and Support of Education Circle of Excellence Award. The UOG 70th Anniversary Museum Exhibit also garnered three NAGC awards and two CASE Circle of Excellence Gold Awards.

"Congratulations to the UOG Marcom Team on being named a finalist for the AMA Higher Education Marketer of the Year Team Award," said UOG president Anita Borja Enriquez. "Despite limited resources and budget constraints, the team's outstanding work showcases their creativity and commitment to excellence and shines a spotlight on the achievements of our colleagues across the university."

The AMA Foundation's Higher Education Marketer of the Year Team Award winners will be announced in November. ***(UOG)***

Application Deadline:
December 15,
2023
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
CONGRESSMAN
GREGORIO KILILI
CAMACHO SABLAN
Serving the People of the Northern Mariana Islands
NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR
MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMY
CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATIONS
Opportunities to learn and serve at a U.S. Service Academy include a fully funded undergraduate education and a commission as a military officer upon graduation.
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
U.S. Military Academy
U.S. Air Force Academy
U.S. Naval Academy
Eligibility: U.S. citizen, unmarried with no dependents, age 17-23, high school senior or graduate, and must meet the medical, physical, and academic requirements of the Academies
To access the nomination application or for more information, visit sablan.house.gov
or call 670-323-2647/8 on Saipan, 433-2647 on Tinian, or 532-2647 on Rota.
Paid for by official funds authorized by the House of Representatives.

KIA
2023
SPORTAGE
Class-leading cargo room & rear seat legroom
Available Multi-terrain
AWD Mode
The Sportage ranked highest in long-term dependability among Compact SUVs in the J.D. Power 2023 U.S. Vehicle Dependability Study.
Starting at
$187*
PER PAYCHECK
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
FREE TINT & ZIEBART UNDERCOATING | 1 YEAR FREE GOLD SERVICE
Visit us at www.joetenmotors.com • Tel. (670) 234-5562
Joeten Motors
POWERED BY YOU
SHOWROOM HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY 8AM - 5PM • SATURDAY 8AM - 12PM
*Some conditions apply, O.A.C., See dealer for details
Like us on Facebook
2023 KIA SPORTAGE LX FWD at $29,995 + Doc Fees with 20% down at 6% APR for 72 Months at 26 pay periods per year O.A.C. Deferred financing $29,224.08 while supplies last.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 214

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Mark Rabago EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Migrant shelter workers toiling 12 hours a day, 7 days a week? What's the deal?

Security guards are often hard workers. And some shift workers prefer to do the job in 12-hour stints, three, four or even five days a week. Nothing that unusual there.

But the invoices filed by Favorite Healthcare Staffing, a national employment firm (owned by the U.K.-based Acacium Group) that is Chicago's biggest contractor when it comes to providing staff for the city's migrant shelters, raises some major questions.

According to Tribune reporting, during one week in March the majority of Favorite Staffing workers at migrant shelters logged 84-hour workweeks and their agency billed the city accordingly, or so the examined invoices imply. To save you the math, that means 12 hours a day, seven days a week. To reiterate: We're not talking a couple or three zealous workers interested in a whole lot of overtime but scores of workers, all apparently choosing to work 12 hours, 7 days a week.

To be clear, we don't have evidence of fraud and there may well be an explanation for these billings we don't yet know. But we'd still like to invite Favorite Healthcare Staffing to come in and discuss with us the how and why of such a high percentage of their workers logging those kinds of highly unusual hours, which require all kinds of overtime, a portion of which presumably accrues to Favorite Healthcare Staffing, assuming they follow standard agency practice.

We'd also like to know how shelter workers doing epic shifts of 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, week after week, seemingly as a matter of routine, can be expected to do an adequate job for the migrants in their charge.

As an example, Tribune reporting found, one guard reported to the city it was at least his 56th day in a row working a 12-hour shift. That's 12 hours, every day for more than seven weeks.

That's assuming the billing is accurate. At this point, we just don't know, since Favorite Healthcare Staffing has not said and the city has not released all of the invoices (it should).

To say that a full audit is merited understates.

This is all adding up to a massive amount of money: some $56 million in billings. A senior vice president for the company told our reporters that Favorite Healthcare Staffing charges "fair and market-based" prices but failed to address the elephant in the room, which is the number of hours worked by a vast majority of the guards.

The history of this goes back to Mayor Lori Lightfoot's administration, which had to ramp up shelters quickly and in doing so, based these contracts on a similar need for help during the COVID-19 crisis.

All of that is to some degree understandable. But a majority of workers working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week is not. Or, at least, not to us.

What do you have to say to the people of Chicago, Favorite Healthcare Staffing, the ones paying your bills?

©2023 Chicago Tribune

For US officials, possible escalation of the Israel-Hamas war is a pressing issue

By DANIEL DEPETRIS
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

As the war between Israel and Hamas enters its third week, President Joe Biden is walking a tightrope and trying to accomplish three objectives simultaneously: ensure Israel has everything it needs to defend itself in what Israeli defense officials admit will be a long and grueling campaign; remind the Israelis that civilian casualties in the Gaza Strip should be kept to an absolute minimum; and prevent the Israel-Hamas conflict from spiraling into a regional conflagration.

It's the geopolitical equivalent of a high-wire act, and success is by no means assured.

To date, the Biden administration has managed to thread the needle decently enough. The Israeli military not only has the equipment, military platforms and personnel to take the fight to Hamas but also has spent weeks hammering Gaza with thousands of airstrikes. Hundreds of thousands of Israeli ground troops are stationed near the Israel-Gaza border waiting for the order to root out Hamas infrastructure and kill the organization's political and military leadership. According to a running tally by The New York Times, 13 Hamas officials have been killed since Israel began bombarding Gaza on Oct. 7.

The second objective, limiting Palestinian civilian casualties, has been less successful. The Israelis are dealing with an extremely complicated operational environment, with Hamas militants setting up their positions amid civilians. Gaza is one of the most densely packed places in the world, and the Palestinians who call Gaza home are limited in where they can go. Due to strict border security measures from Israel and Egypt, the more than 2 million Palestinians in the area are in a state of desperation. They have two options: Stay in their homes and hope they don't get bombed and buried under the rubble or flee south, as the Israeli army has instructed, and risk getting killed along the main evacuation routes. That Hamas has apparently blocked some Palestinians from leaving Gaza's northern half only adds to the misery, as does Israel's initial decision to cut off food, water and fuel supplies to the area.

While humanitarian aid has finally crossed the Rafah border crossing into Gaza, this good news is belied by the fact that three to four dozen trucks filled with aid are woefully insufficient to deal with the desperation in the enclave. Biden and his aides will need to continue leaning on Israel and Egypt to accelerate the aid shipments. This becomes even more urgent after Israeli ground troops enter Gaza in large numbers.

In terms of direct U.S. security interests, the escalation piece of the puzzle is by far the most important. Thus far, the U.S. has tried to contain the fighting through a mixture of deterrence and dialogue: deploying U.S. military assets in the region and using ties with regional partners to send Iran and Hezbollah the message, "Don't get involved."

On Oct. 14, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin ordered the deployment of a second carrier strike group, the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, to join the USS Gerald R. Ford in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. On Oct. 17, 2,000 U.S. military personnel received "prepare to deploy" orders, military jargon for "get ready to move if we order you to move." And over the weekend, Austin sent another Terminal High Altitude Area Defense antimissile defense system to the Middle East as well as several additional Patriot missile system battalions.

Even so, U.S. officials are still worried that escalation is a real and pressing issue. "We are concerned at the possibility of Iranian proxies, escalating their attacks against our own personnel, our own people," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Sunday. Austin had a near-identical assessment: "We're concerned about potential escalation. In fact, what we're seeing is a prospect of a significant escalation of attacks on our troops and our people throughout the region."

Austin is right but only to a point. There isn't a prospect of significant escalation against U.S. troops—the significant escalation has already occurred. Several attack drones from Iranian-supported Shia militias targeted U.S. bases in the region last week, from the al-Tanf base in eastern Syria to a facility near Baghdad's international airport—the first such attacks since March. The USS Carney, a warship that was traveling through the Suez Canal, intercepted a volley of drones and missiles that were launched by the Houthis in Yemen, presumably in the direction of Israel. There was another attack on U.S. troops in Syria on Monday morning, although no injuries were reported.

Then there's Hezbollah, the terrorist group that dominates southern Lebanon and has become a kingmaker in Lebanese politics. As bad as Hamas is, Hezbollah is even worse and boasts formidable military capability. Indeed, Hezbollah is more like a quasi-army than a terrorist group. It has tens of thousands of fighters with extensive experience training other Iranian-backed proxy groups in the region and a missile arsenal that might be as high as 150,000. Some of those missiles are precision-guided and can reach all of Israel's territory.

If Hezbollah chooses to get involved in a significant way, Israel would be forced to fight on two fronts, something it hasn't had to do since 2006, when Hezbollah was far less capable than it is today. Israeli and Hezbollah forces have engaged in limited cross-border fire for more than a week, with fatalities

See FOR on Page 11

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

NDEAM: Primary measure of success

By JIM RAYPHAND
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jim Rayphand is the director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and is a former executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc.

It is something of an understatement to say that the primary measure of "success" for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, otherwise known as OVR, which is employment for individuals with disabilities, rests almost entirely in the hands of employers. Put another way, OVR would not exist if not for employers. And yet, contrary to popular belief, the onus for getting and maintaining employment still rests squarely on the individuals themselves, not on OVR and certainly not on the employers. Individuals with disabilities, like everyone else, still have a responsibility to be qualified for the jobs that they want to hold and, given individual will and determination, OVR can assist in making that happen.

No doubt persons with disabilities face unique challenges and barriers to employment that their non-disabled peers do not, but that in and of itself does not entitle them employment. It does, however, entitle them to a series of special class legal protections, government benefits and services, but not to employment itself.

The CNMI has a unique (to my knowledge no other state in the nation has anything remotely similar) collaborative spirit among several of its local agencies tasked with coordinating, facilitating, and providing these entitlements and services on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Known as the Disability Network Partners, or DNP, we stand in solidarity around the common mission of helping all people with disabilities achieve their employment goals, live independent lives as contributing members of our community, and in support of their general quest for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The core partners of the DNP (this is not an exhaustive list), their respective mission/functions and contact information include the following:

■ **Center for Living Independently, or CLI: "To ensure the rights of people with disabilities to live independently and fully integrated within the community."**
(670) 322-4303/04 / 287-4304 or email: ssatur@clicnmi.org

■ **Council on Developmental Disabilities, or CDD:** "To promote systems change to ensure that individuals with disabilities and their families have the same opportunities as others in the community." (670) 664-7000 email: psablan.cnmicdd@gmail.com

■ **University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, or UCEDD:** "To promote, support and enhance the independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities and their families in the community."
Email: cnmi.ucedd@marianas.edu, Eileen.babauta@marianas.edu

■ **Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc., or NMPASI:** "To protect the civil, legal, and human rights of individuals with disabilities"…through legally-based advocacy. (670) 235-7273/4 email: gborja@nmpasi.org

■ **Office of Vocational Rehabilitation/Office of the Governor:** "To promote independence and increase employment among individuals with disabilities in the CNMI." (670) 322-6537/8 email: jimbo@ovrgov.net

Employment of people with disabilities is not commonplace and often takes coordinated, proactive efforts by a team of people to make it happen. Despite the countless examples of people with disabilities being excellent employees, they still have to contend with prejudice and discrimination even from employers. That being said, it gives us great pleasure to recognize the handful of employers who do not shy away from opportunities to partner with OVR in making employment goals for our clients a reality. More specifically, OVR in partnership with other DNP members, acknowledge and thank the following employers for their extended partnerships this past year in providing work experience, on-the-job training and, in a few cases, full-time employment for individuals with disabilities: DCCA-DYS, AUGUST SUPERMARKET, KINPACHI, JOETEN KIYU PUBLIC LIBRARY, CNMI PSS-MHS, CNMI PSS-SSHS, DPW-Tinian, Tinian Ice & Water Bottling Company, CNMI-PSS-KHS, DPS-Rota, Delta Management-Shell, Center for Living Independently, JJ & K Company, Tinian Mayor's Office, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Joeten Superstore, Green Meadow School, and Tinian Western Lodge.

When asked what message they'd like to convey to employers and community members during National Disability Employment Awareness Month regarding the importance of inclusion and equal opportunities in the workforce, our OVR counselors shared a common theme of, "give them a chance." To quote a couple of them:

"Open your doors to our qualified individuals with disabilities and give them the opportunity to show their potential and what they can offer to your company."—Rose Ichiuo, VR counselor

"Give persons with disabilities an opportunity to be employed and take advantage of OVR's programs on work employment training and on the job training."—Ray Diaz, VR counselor

As for any advice to individuals with disabilities who are looking to secure employment, "active participation is the key to achieving your employment goal. …Utilize the resources provided by OVR and participate fully in your application and individualized plan for employment."

For more on NDEAM and/or the Disability Network Partners, please contact the OVR office or any of the listed partners via above contact information.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Be average or seek greatness?

Many citizens are confused and don't understand what direction we are headed nor how are we going to get there. No one can deny that we need some greatness to improve our economy and social fabric to come from Capital Hill—not the continued suppression of our quality of life with more taxes, higher fees, and the list goes on of things being done that make life harder for us regular folks, especially the poor. Come to think of it, former governors Camacho and Tenorio are the only two governors that I considered as approaching or being great during their terms, as we had a lot of good but not great governors. Well, we need our governor and other leaders right now to be great and not average, as the CNMI is teetering on the brink if things are not turned-around (reformed). This is not an attack on the governor, as there are 29 other elected leaders on the Hill. But it is no secret that there are genuine questions and concerns being raised on the coconut wire about what is happening and what is not happening with our economy and our social fabric.

Greatness can only be achieved when the opportunity for greatness reveals itself, as you cannot manufacture greatness. There are opportunities for greatness everywhere you look but there seems to be no takers. CUC has just approved the purchase of new engines and yet, since the conception of CUC, there hasn't been a single local person trained to maintain our engines. I was trying to get MPLT to sponsor a special scholarships for highly specialized jobs like this to be filled by locals, but no one listened when virtually all of our civil engineers are CWs. Sen. Edith does have an initiative that is asleep in the House that will set the conditions for NMDs to finally access their money, which would indeed be great. So, stop holding up greatness with the NMDs Money and get Sen. Edith's initiative done!

There are those who still want the Chinese to return when we know it will deter the Japanese tourist market that we founded our tourism industry upon. Where is the great plan to bring back the Japanese market? Where are the hotel promotions for the Japanese market? Where are the airline promotions for the Japanese market? If CPA would spend half the time trying to work with the governor as opposed to fighting the very ideology that established our Tourism industry (Japanese tourists) the CNMI might be able to make some headway in rebuilding our tourism market. But it can't even be resolved as to who has jurisdiction to take care of the tourist sites when DPW is the only one with the equipment and capacity to maintain these sites. It's a ridiculous funding fight within our government, just like what the mayor is facing with our quarry. Why should the mayor use public funds to purchase from a publicly-owned quarry? It's a far cry from greatness, but it's madness regardless of what the law alleges. Heck, the Casino Commission continues to get paid, but there's not a single word about a definitive resolution to the $77 million owed the CNMI, as if this money is insignificant.

Where is the systemic workforce transition plan, as the Northern Marianas College, Public School System, and Northern Marianas Technical Institute are struggling to transition students into the workforce but they need real help and leadership from the government to make a real dent in transitioning workers across-the-board. Board of Education member Orsini was right when he said: "The only way to get all the stakeholders involved in the workforce transition challenge is by law and even then, we will have to twist some of their arms to get them to cooperate."

Sen. Edith also is very right about the 902 talks, as we could use financial and technical expertise assistance and we even need some diplomacy help with the Japanese government to fix our economy, especially if we want to bring back the Japanese tourist market. Our government is only reacting to the challenges instead of instituting economic and social initiatives to reform our situation for the immediate and distant future. I could go on and on but I think it's clear the CNMI needs to make some solid reforms and all the stakeholders (government and private sector) need to buy-in and help. Stop working against each other, because we will all find prosperity together or continue to flounder in our own mess. Do we continue to be average and below or start striving for greatness?

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman III, Saipan

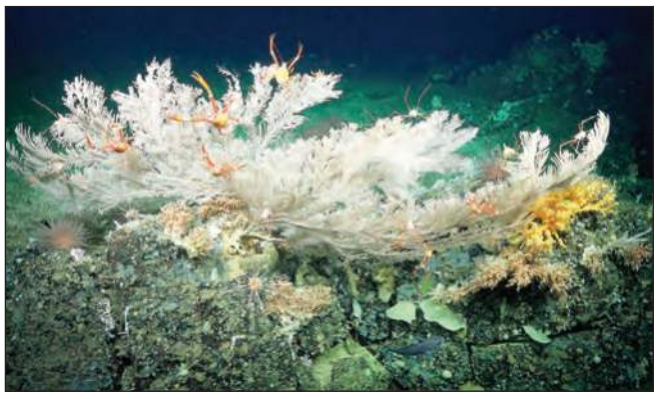
FOR
From page 10

registered on both sides.

Israel's generals will have late nights in the days and weeks ahead. But so will America's diplomats, who will be responsible for achieving goals that are no less vital: Stand by Israel as it pursues the dismantling of Hamas, even while continuing to maintain communication with all the potential combatants in the hopes of ensuring an already-tragic war doesn't get even worse.

Daniel DePetris is a fellow at Defense Priorities and a foreign affairs columnist for the Chicago Tribune.

Scientists discover healthy deep-sea coral reefs, new seamounts



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An area of biodiversity (including corals, crustaceans, urchins, anemones, and more) on Cacho De Coral, a newly discovered pristine coral reef. The dive investigated the volcanic plug of the caldera, then transited over steep terrain to examine the extent of the reef and the corals that live there.

PUERTO AYORA, Ecuador—Scientists examining underwater cliff ecosystems onboard research vessel *Falkor* (too) using the 4,500-meter robot, ROV SuBastian, have discovered two pristine coral reefs in the waters surrounding the Galápagos Islands.

These newly identified cold-water reefs are situated at depths ranging from 370 to 420 meters. The discovery expands our understanding of deep reefs within the Galápagos Islands Marine Reserve.

The larger of the two reefs spans over 800 meters in length, the equivalent of eight football fields. The second, smaller reef measures 250 meters in length. They exhibit a rich diversity of stony coral species, suggesting that they have likely been forming and supporting marine biodiversity for thousands of years. This discovery follows the April 2023 finding of the first deep coral reefs in the Galápagos Marine Reserve by scientists onboard Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's R/V *Atlantis* diving in the HOV Alvin submersible.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Research Vessel *Falkor (too)* off the Galápagos Islands during the recent expedition that discovered two pristine cold-water coral reefs, situated at depths ranging from 370 to 420 meters.

One goal of the expedition was to apply laser scanning technology for creating extremely high-resolution maps of these reefs. The laser scanner produced two-millimeter resolution maps capable of identifying animals living on the seafloor.

Because of the coarse resolution, most underwater mapping technology cannot image living organisms.

In addition to discovering the reefs, scientists uncovered two uncharted seamounts and mapped them to a high resolution. The seamounts were suspected to exist based on satellite data and are now confirmed.

"This information is not only valuable from a scientific perspective, but it also provides a solid foundation for decision-making that effectively protects these ecosystems, safeguarding the biological diversity they harbor and ensuring their resilience in a constantly changing environment. The geological dynamics of the region play a fundamental role in the deep-sea ecosystems. Research and mapping are essential tools to ensure that the Galápagos continue to be an iconic example of the beauty and importance of nature," stated Danny Rueda Córdova, director of the Galápagos National Park Directorate.

The 30-day expedition began on Sept. 18, 2023 and was led by Dr. Katleen Robert of the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. The expedition included 24 participating scientists representing 13 organizations and universities including the Galápagos National Park Directorate (GNPD), Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF), the Ecuadorian Navy's Oceanographic and Antarctic Institute (INOCAR), National Geographic Society, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI), University of Bristol, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), University of Costa Rica, the UK National Oceanography Centre, Institut de Ciencies del Mar in Barcelona, Spain, and the University of East Anglia-UK.

"We are thrilled our mapping data are able to improve our understanding of reef ecosystems in the Galápagos," said Robert, "The interdisciplinary science team is excited that the data collected during this expedition will contribute to growing knowledge on the Galápagos National Marine Reserve and

See SCIENTISTS on Page 13

TRUE SAVINGS
Keep banking.
Keep moving.
Don't stop.
With our True Savings account, you have the flexibility to save how you want. Build your rainy day or big goal fund without the typical minimum balance requirements. Start saving your way with True Savings and bank how you move.
Open your account* today at
bankofguam.com
Bank of Guam
Member FDIC
*Only offered in Guam and the CNMI. Terms and conditions apply.

CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP23-OPD/DLNR-DFW-42300108

SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2023 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS FOR MIHA AND THE GARAPAN WATERSHED"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 12552, ANATAHAN DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP CAN BE MADE TO THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TO MS. ERIN DERRINGTON, VIA EMAIL AT erin.derrington@opd.gov.mp OR MR. BRADLEY EICHELBERGER, VIA EMAIL AT beichelberger.cnmi.dfw@gmail.com

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELIZABETH S. BALAJADIA
ACTING DIRECTOR, OPD

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

/S/ SYLVAN O. IGISOMAR
SECRETARY, DLNR

IT&E upgrades Enterprise services and branding

IT&E announced it has upgraded business solutions alongside a refreshed Enterprise branding.

With IT&E, businesses and organizations of all sizes can connect their business with tools and support that provide them with competitive advantages. Internet, voice, and data solutions remain the core of IT&E's enterprise offerings. New and upgraded services include Cybersecurity, Cloud, Managed IT, and Data Center services.

"As technology advances, there are always new ways for a business to improve or operate more efficiently. At IT&E, we're dedicated to offering the expertise and best possible services to our clients to help them succeed," said IT&E president Jim Oehlerking.

Along with upgraded business solutions, IT&E has rebranded its Enterprise services to reinforce IT&E's commitment to innovation and progress and distinguish it from the core IT&E branding. The updated Enterprise branding encourages curiosity about how technology can be used to improve businesses with the new tagline: Ask Blue.

In addition, curiosity drives the IT&E team to learn, search and discover solutions for Enterprise clients.

For more information about Enterprise services, organizations can call (671) 922-9000 [Guam] / (670) 682-9000 [CNMI] or visit enterprise.ite.net. ***(IT&E)***

IT&E

IT&E celebrated the rebranding of its Enterprise services at a mixer with clients held at the Guam Museum on Oct. 24, 2023. Pictured from left are Latara P. Sasamoto, Enterprise Sales Account manager at IT&E; Jimson Dator, senior executive director of Sales at IT&E; Jim Oehlerking, president of IT&E, John J. Rivera, director of Human Resources and Corporate Development at Citadel Pacific Ltd., and Clarissa T. Guerrero, assistant sales manager of Enterprise Sales at IT&E.

SCIENTISTS

From page 12

contribute to the management of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor."

In addition to investigating coral biodiversity in the Galápagos, the scientists explored areas within the Isla del Coco National Marine Park, a protected area managed by Costa Rica. The team, led by National Geographic Explorer Ana Belen Yanez, explored

seamounts south-west of Isla del Coco and examined links between coral communities on seamounts in the Galápagos and those in Costa Rica. On one of the ROV dives, the researchers observed multiple deep-sea coral species laden with eggs. This research contributes data to inform the management of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor, a network of interconnected marine reserves managed by the governments of Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama, and Colombia.

"The Galápagos Marine Reserve is an area of outstanding biological importance, connected to partner marine protected areas across the Eastern Pacific. Finding such deep and long-lived reef takes us important steps closer to protecting hidden dimensions of ocean diversity and understanding the role that deep habitats play in maintaining our ocean's health," said CDF's Stuart Banks. "These fascinating new findings continue to feed important research to inform better management of existing

and future marine protected areas in the region."

"The Galápagos and Costa Rica Marine Reserves are globally renowned for their pristine beauty and Schmidt Ocean Institute is honored to be operating several expeditions in this part of the world," said Jyotika Virmani, executive director of Schmidt Ocean Institute. "This is our second of three expeditions, and it is amazing that the scientists who sail on R/V Falkor (too) continue to find hotbeds of biodiversity each time we send ROV SuBastian down to the seafloor." ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BID ADVERTISING CONCESSION AT THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA/TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Project No.: CPA-IFB-005-23
CPA Concession No.: TAD-2023-01-02

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed bids, subject to the terms and conditions of the Invitation for Bid (the "IFB"), and other contract provisions, for bids from firms, companies, and/or corporations for Advertising Opportunities at the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport.

The IFB will be issued and available for pick-up beginning September 27, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, at the Administration Office, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport or at the CPA Office located at the Francisco Manglona Borja/ Tinian International Airport. CPA offices are closed every other Monday beginning Monday, October 2, 2023 for austerity reasons and also on holidays. The IFB includes layouts of the advertisement area and other requirements. All responses to this IFB shall also take into account any and/or all costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Prospective bidders will be required to pay an administrative fee of $100.00 for costs associated with handling and consideration of the bid.

Questions and/or clarification concerning this project shall be in writing and sent to the attention of the Tinian Port Manager, Antonio L. Borja through email at alborja@cnmiports.com with copy to Joy Ann Tenorio at joy.tenorio@cnmiports.com no later than October 11, 2023.

All bids shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "INVITATION FOR BID SUBMISSION: CONFIDENTIAL, ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY CPA-IFB-005-23." One (1) original and two (2) copies of the bid must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time, October 31, 2023, to the Authority Administration Section, Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

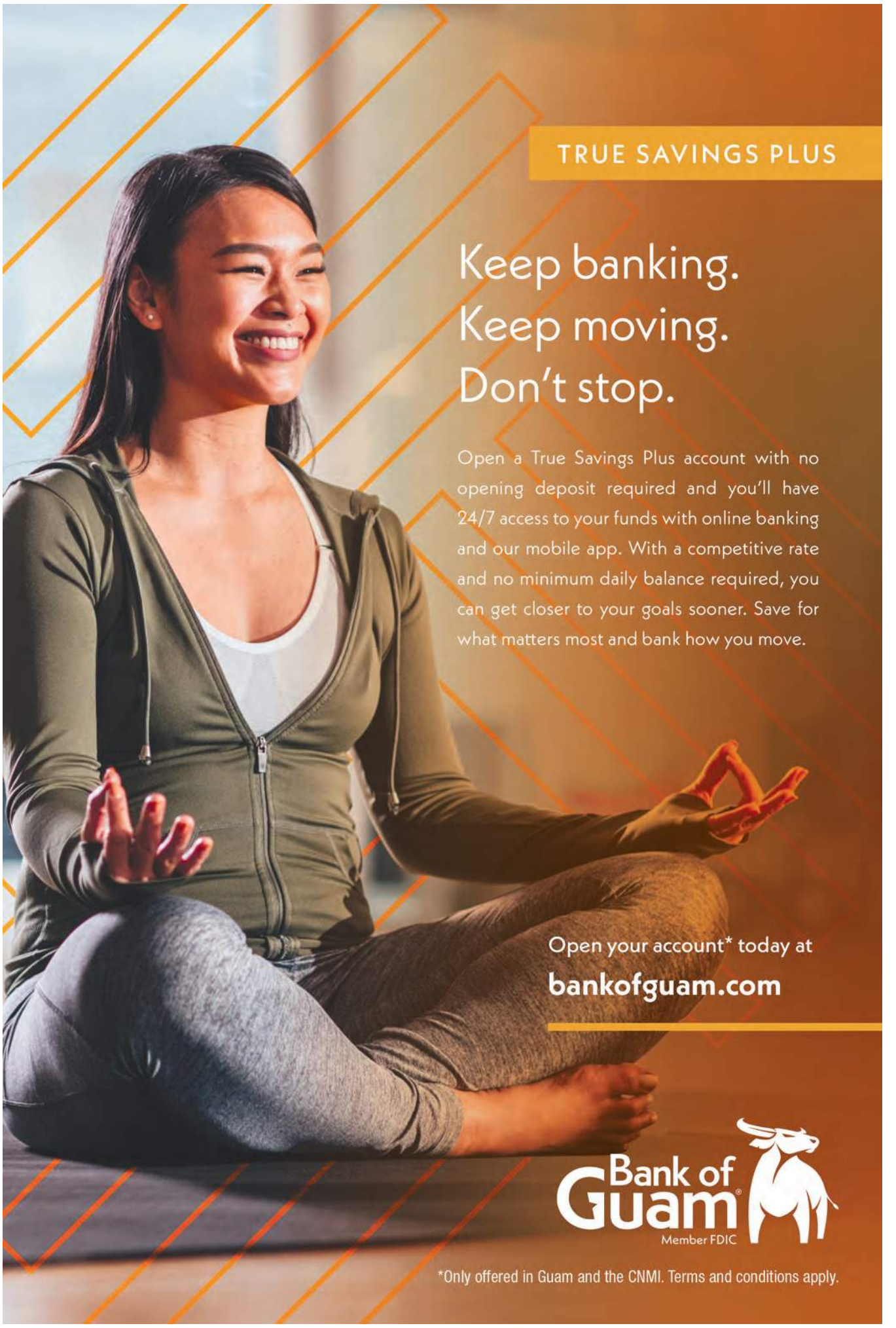
Bids will be opened on October 31, 2023, at 3:00p.m. at the Commonwealth Ports Authority Meeting Room, Saipan International Airport. Bids are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee. The concessions are for the right to advertise at certain designated locations within the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport for a period of two (2) years and requires the concessionaire to operate such concession to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so, would be in CPA's best interest. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All bids shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

9/25/2023
Date

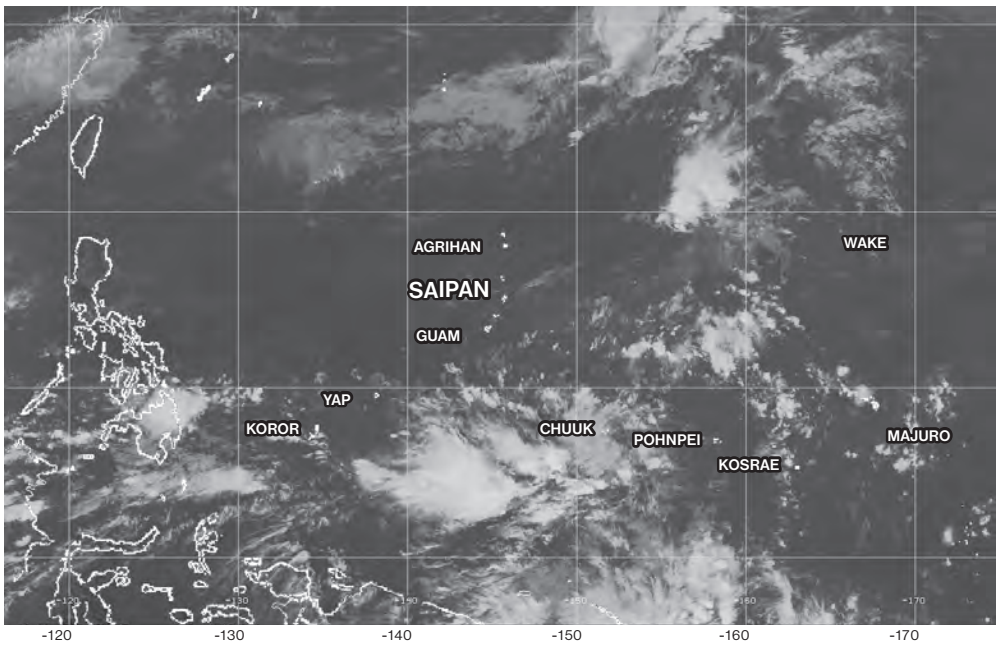

TRUE SAVINGS PLUS
Keep banking.
Keep moving.
Don't stop.
Open a True Savings Plus account with no opening deposit required and you'll have 24/7 access to your funds with online banking and our mobile app. With a competitive rate and no minimum daily balance required, you can get closer to your goals sooner. Save for what matters most and bank how you move.
Open your account* today at
bankofguam.com
Bank of Guam
Member FDIC
*Only offered in Guam and the CNMI. Terms and conditions apply.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly sunny. A 30 percent chance of showers. A slight chance of thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
89 / 79°	89 / 79°	87 / 77°	87 / 77°	88 / 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:54 AM, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows only a few showers moving through the Marianas Waters this morning, with scattered showers northwest of the waters and southeast. The buoys reveal an east-northeast swell of 3 to 5 feet, which is dominating the combined seas.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:11 AM	5:50 PM
Saturday	6:11 AM	5:49 PM
Sunday	6:11 AM	5:49 PM
Monday	6:12 AM	5:49 PM
Tuesday	6:12 AM	5:48 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	4:18 AM	4:39 PM
Saturday	-	5:15 AM	5:21 PM
Sunday	-	6:14 AM	6:05 PM
Monday	-	7:13 AM	6:52 PM
Tuesday	-	8:14 AM	7:42 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	66° / 57°
Beijing	Cloudy	66° / 45°
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	84° / 72°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	83° / 72°
London	Cloudy	63° / 52°
Los Angeles	Sunny	97° / 66°
Manila	Showers	88° / 77°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	81° / 63°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 72°
New York	Showers	63° / 49°
Osaka	Sunny	73° / 61°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	70° / 52°
Busan	Sunny	72° / 59°
Rome	Sunny	73° / 48°
Salem	Sunny	71° / 45°
San Francisco	Sunny	76° / 53°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	72° / 46°
Tokyo	Sunny	70° / 55°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	61° / 46°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:20 AM	Low Tide	0.38
6:10 AM	High Tide	1.78
12:18 PM	Low Tide	0.33
6:24 PM	High Tide	2.00

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 8, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

McDonald's Halloween Kids Costume Contest this Sunday

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

» Also holds branch Halloween decoration tilt

McDonald's Saipan will be hosting its first-ever Halloween Kids Costume Contest at its Chalan Laulau location this Sunday, Oct. 29.

The competition is open for all kids ages 0-14. There will be three categories for an opportunity to win a $30 Arch Card—Best McDonald's-Inspired, Most Creative, Funniest.

"In the past, we've held different activities at our restaurant to kick off the holiday season. This time, we came up with this contest to allow kids the opportunity to dress up, have fun and celebrate with their family at McDonald's!" said McDonald's of Saipan owner/operator Marcia Ayuyu.

To enter, participants must complete the online registration, dress up in Halloween costume, and then visit McDonald's Chalan Laulau starting at 3pm on Sunday, Oct. 29.

For more information or to register your child/children for the Halloween Kids Costume Contest, visit www.mcdonalds-guamandsaipan.com/contest.

The McDonald's franchise in the Marianas also recently hosted a Halloween Store Decoration Contest.

All McDonald's of Guam and Saipan restaurants competed in a friendly competition to win the best decorated restaurant.

The Chalan Laulau Store on Saipan decorated their store with a "Wizards and Witches" theme, while the Garapan store decorated their's with an "Angels and Devils" theme.

The decoration themes for the Guam location were the following: Agana (Haunted Mansion); Harmon (Spooky Pumpkin Patch); Maite (Disney Villains); Tamuning (Ghostbusters); and Yigo (Pirates of the Caribbean).

"We're excited to host our McDonald's Halloween Store Decoration Contest annually. The Halloween Store Decoration Contest saw creativity, originality, and sustainability take center stage and is a spooktacular treat for our valued customers to enjoy. It also gives our employees a chance to get creative, have fun, and get into the Halloween spirit! Our customers look forward to visiting us to see what we come up with every year and it's a great team-bonding activity for our crew and managers," said Ayuyu.

The seven stores were judged on creativity, originality, neatness, art skills, and declared theme. The Top 3 stores will receive a cash prize for their restaurant's crew and managers—first place $250, second place $150, and third place $100.

McDonald's Saipan invited Zowie Cruz, 2022 Miss Earth NMI; Nhorleen Lilles, *Saipan Tribune* graphic artist, and Natasha Palacios, social media influencer, to serve as judges in its Halloween Decoration Contest on Saipan.

McDonald's of Guam and Saipan will announce the winners of the Halloween Store Decoration Vontest on Nov. 3 via social media @ mcdonaldsofguamandsaipan.

MCDONALD'S SAIPAN

Halloween Store Decoration Contest Saipan judges—2022 Miss Earth NMI Zowie Cruz, fourth from left, *Saipan Tribune* graphic artist Nhorleen Lilles, second from right. and social media influencer Natasha Palacios, third from left—pose with McDonald's Chalan Laulau staff.

MCDONALD'S SAIPAN

McDonald's Chalan Laulau's "Wizards and Witches" theme Halloween decoration.

MCDONALD'S SAIPAN

McDonald's Garapan's "Angels and Devils" theme Halloween decoration

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION FOR BID
AMENDED
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-003-24
SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2023: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THREE (3) BRAND NEW UTILITY VEHICLES TO THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING OCTOBER 09, 2023 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF THREE (03) BRAND NEW UTILITY VEHICLES TO THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT **(IFB-003-24)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR **BEFORE 2:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 14, 2023. A 10% BID BOND/GUARANTY OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED** WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

WENDI PRATER DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2023
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF AUCTION/BIDDING

2019 TOYOTA CHR 5DR WGN (Color: White)
25,961 Miles
Condition: Good
MINIMUM BID: $22,994.00

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres or his designee, for and on behalf of the Bank of Guam, will sell at auction the abovementioned vehicle to the highest bidder on **November 24, at 10:00 a.m. at the Bank of Guam Rota Branch.**

Terms and Conditions of Sale.

1. **Rights and Duties of Auctioneer.** Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties conduting the auction sale:
   a) withdraw the chattel mortgage (vehicle) listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such chattel mortgage (vehicle) is accepted;
   b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before the chattel mortgage (vehicle) is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
   c) to reject any and all bids.

2. **Minimum Bid.** The minimum bid for the sale of the abovementioned vehicle is **twenty two thousand nine hundred ninety four and 00/100 $22,994.00.** The vehicle will be sold to the highest bidder "as is, where is" without any warranties. **All bids shall be in writing and constitute a formal offer from each bidder. The vehicle bid form may be picked up at the Bank of Guam Rota Branch. Bids may be submitted in advance for said vehicle.** Bids may be submitted in person (at the auction), via email, or in writing by telephone to Bank of Guam Rota Branch's Manager, Kayla Mendiola, Phone: 670-483-5027, Fax: 670-532-3609, Email: kaylabeann.mendiola@bankofguam.com by 4:00pm Chamorro Standard Time on November 23, 2023. For inspections of the vehicle, contact Bank of Guam Rota's Branch's Manager, Kayla Mendiola, at the above contact information. All bids less than $22,994.00 will be rejected. Any person who registers his/her bid shall provide a vaild identification card (vaild CNMI Driver's License or Passport). A written bid shall include the bidder's sigature, with his/her telephone number, mailing address, and any other contact information. The winning bidder shall be the person whom the vehicle is confirmed to, if the bid is accepted. **Please contact the Bank of Guam Rota Branch for a bid form.**

3. **Payment.** The entire purchase price must be paid within three (3) days after the auction sale. **Personal checks /company checks are not accepted.** All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. The Bank of Guam Rota Branch shall release the chattel mortgage to the winning bidder with a valid driver's license. Failure to make payment will result in the forfeiture of the accepted bid. The next highest bidder (minimum $22,994.00) may be awarded.

4. **Change of Terms.** Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam Rota Branch reserve the right to change any of the term conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

DATED this 25th day of October, 2023. /s/_____ Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION FOR BID
AMENDED
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-002-24
SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2023: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) UNIT BRAND NEW HEAVY DUTY TRUCK FOR SAIPAN SEAPORT POLICE"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING OCTOBER 09, 2023 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ONE (1) UNIT BRAND NEW HEAVY DUTY TRUCK FOR SAIPAN SEAPORT POLICE **(IFB-002-24)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 14, 2023. **A 10% BID BOND/GUARANTY OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS.** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

WENDI PRATER DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2023
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION FOR BID
AMENDED
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-001-24
SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2023: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF FOUR (4) BRAND NEW VEHICLES TO THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING OCTOBER 09, 2023 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF FOUR (04) BRAND NEW VEHICLES TO THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT **(IFB-001-24)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 14, 2023. **A 10% BID BOND OR CASHEIR'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS.** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

WENDI PRATER DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2023
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nation

Johnson is new House speaker

WASHINGTON (AP)—Republican Mike Johnson is the new speaker of the House, but the ally of Donald Trump inherits many of the same political problems that have tormented past GOP leaders, tested their grasp of the gavel and eventually chased them out of office.

When the House convenes Thursday it will be a bustle of activity, making up for lost time during the weeks of chaos since the ouster of Kevin McCarthy. But the goodwill toward Johnson blurs the political fault lines challenging the Louisianan's ability to lead the GOP majority as it faces daunting issues ahead.

By Nov. 17, the Congress must fund the government again or risk a federal shutdown. President Joe Biden wants an additional $105 billion in military and humanitarian aid for Israel and Ukraine. And Republicans are eager to resume their impeachment inquiry into Biden over his son's business dealings.

"This has been a grueling process," Johnson said Wednesday after he took the gavel. "The challenge before us is great but the time for action is now, and I will not let you down."

Johnson, 51, swept through on the first ballot with support from all Republicans anxious to put the past weeks of tumult behind and get on with the business of governing. He was quickly sworn into office, second in line to the presidency.

AP

Rep. Mike Johnson, R-La., takes the oath to be the new House speaker from the Dean of the House Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky., at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023.

A lower-ranked member of the House GOP leadership team, Johnson emerged as the fourth Republican nominee in what had become an almost absurd cycle of political infighting since McCarthy's ouster as GOP factions jockeyed for power.

While not the party's top choice for the gavel, the deeply religious and even-keeled Johnson has few foes and an important GOP backer: Trump.

"He's a tremendous leader," Trump said Wednesday at the New York courthouse where the former president, who is now the Republican frontrunner for president in 2024, is on trial over a lawsuit alleging business fraud. "He's going to make us all proud."

Biden called to congratulate the new speaker and said it's "time for all of us to act responsibly" to fund the government and provide aid for Ukraine and Israel.

"We need to move swiftly," the president said in a statement.

In the House, far-right members had refused to accept a more traditional speaker, and moderate conservatives didn't want a hard-liner. But the affable Johnson, who has been in office less than a decade, drew lawmakers together through his evangelical faith, his conservative roots and Trump's nod after more seasoned leaders had failed.

Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., who led the small band of eight hardliners who ousted McCarthy, said, "You watch and see how much this House of Representatives can actually get done under Mike Johnson."

At least 16 dead, dozens injured in Maine shooting

LEWISTON, Maine (AP)—A man opened fire at a bar and a bowling alley in Lewiston, Maine, on Wednesday, killing at least 16 people, wounding dozens of others and throwing the state's second-largest city into chaos as hundreds of police searched for a person of interest and residents were ordered to shelter in place.

A police intelligence bulletin identified Robert Card, who was trained as a firearms instructor at a U.S. Army Reserve training facility in Maine, as the person of interest. The document, reviewed by The Associated Press and circulated to law enforcement officials, says Card had been committed to a mental health facility for two weeks in the summer of 2023. It did not provide specific details about his treatment or condition.

The document also said Card had reported hearing voices and had threatened to carry out a shooting at the military training base in Saco, Maine. A telephone number listed for Card in public records was not in service.

Lewiston Police said in an earlier Facebook post that they were dealing with an active shooter incident at Schemengees Bar and Grille and Spa-retime Recreation, a bowling alley about 4 miles (6.4 kilometers) away. The Androscoggin County Sheriff's Office released two photos of the suspect on its Facebook page that showed a shooter walking into an establishment with a weapon raised to their shoulder. Authorities said the shooting started just before 7 p.m.

Two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press that at least 16 people were killed and the toll was expected to rise. However, Michael Sauschuck, commissioner of the Maine Department of Public Safety, declined to provide a specific estimate at a news conference, calling it a "fluid situation."

The two law enforcement officials said dozens of people also had been wounded. The officials were not authorized to publicly discuss details of the ongoing investigation and spoke to AP on condition of anonymity.

On its website, Central Maine Medical Center said staff were "reacting to a mass casualty, mass shooter event" and were coordinating with area hospitals to take in patients. The hospital was locked down and police, some armed with rifles, stood by the entrances.

Meanwhile, hospitals as far away as Portland, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) to the south, were on alert to potentially receive victims.

Authorities ordered residents and business owners to stay inside and off the streets. The shelter-in-place order was extended Wednesday night from Lewiston to Lisbon, about 8 miles (13 kilometers) away, after a "vehicle of interest" was found there, authorities said.

World

AHEAD OF EXPECTED WIDER INCURSION

Israeli troops launch brief ground raid into Gaza Strip

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israeli troops and tanks launched a brief ground raid into northern Gaza overnight into Thursday, the military said, striking several militant targets in order to "prepare the battlefield" ahead of a widely expected ground invasion after more than two weeks of devastating air raids.

The raid came after the U.N. warned it is on the verge of running out of fuel in the Gaza Strip, forcing it to sharply curtail relief efforts in the territory, which has also been under a complete siege since Hamas' bloody rampage across southern Israel ignited the war earlier this month.

Hospitals in Gaza struggled to treat masses of wounded with dwindling resources. Health officials said the death toll was soaring as Israeli jets pounded Gaza. Workers pulled dead and wounded civilians, including many children, out of landscapes of rubble in cities across the territory.

Gaza's Health Ministry, which is controlled by Hamas, said Wednesday that more than 750 people were killed over the past 24 hours, higher than the 704 killed the previous day. The Associated Press could not independently verify the death toll, and the ministry does not distinguish between civilians and combatants.

The Israeli military, which accuses Hamas of operating among civilians, said its strikes killed militants and destroyed military targets. Gaza militants have fired unrelenting rocket barrages into Israel since the conflict started.

During the overnight raid, the military said soldiers struck fighters, militant infrastructure and anti-tank missile launching positions. There were no immediate reports of casualties on either aide.

The rising death tolls in Gaza are unprecedented in the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Even greater loss of life could come if Israel launches an expected ground offensive aimed at crushing Hamas, which has ruled Gaza since 2007 and survived four previous wars with Israel.

The Gaza Health Ministry says more than 6,500 Palestinians have been killed in the war. That figure includes the disputed toll from an explosion at a hospital last week.

The fighting has killed more than 1,400 people in Israel, mostly civilians slain during the initial Hamas attack, according to the Israeli government. Hamas also holds some 222 hostages in Gaza.

The warning by the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, over depleting fuel supplies raised alarm that the humanitarian crisis could quickly worsen.

Gaza's population has also been running out of food, water and medicine. About 1.4 million of Gaza's 2.3 million residents have fled their homes, with nearly half of them crowded into U.N. shelters.

In recent days, Israel let a small number of trucks with aid enter from Egypt but barred deliveries of fuel—needed to power generators—saying it believes Hamas will take it.

UNRWA has been sharing its own fuel supplies so that trucks can distribute aid, bakeries can feed people in shelters, water can be desalinated, and hospitals can keep incubators, life support machines and other vital equipment working.

If it continues doing all of that, fuel will run out by Thursday, so the agency is deciding how to ration its supply, UNRWA spokeswoman Tamara Alrifai told The Associated Press.

"Do we give for the incubators or the bakeries?" she said. "It is an excruciating decision."

More than half of Gaza's primary health care facilities and roughly a third of its hospitals have stopped functioning, the World Health Organization said.

S. Korea, US, Japan condemn N. Korea's alleged supply of munitions to Russia

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea, the U.S. and Japan strongly condemned what they call North Korea's supply of munitions and military equipment to Russia, saying Thursday that such weapons shipments sharply increase the human toll of Russia's war in Ukraine.

A joint statement by the top diplomats of South Korea, the U.S. and Japan came days after Russia's foreign minister scoffed at a recent U.S. claim that his country received munitions from North Korea, saying that Washington has failed to prove the allegation.

"We will continue to work together with the international community to expose Russia's attempts to acquire military equipment from (North Korea)," said the joint statement by South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa.

"Such weapons deliveries, several of which we now confirm have been completed, will significantly increase the human toll of Russia's war of aggression," it said.

North Korea and Russia—both locked in separate confrontations with the U.S. and its allies—have recently taken steps to strengthen their defense and other ties. Speculation about North Korea's provision of conventional arms to refill Russia's exhausted weapons stores flared last month, when North Korean leader Kim Jong Un traveled to Russia's Far East to meet President Vladimir Putin and visit key military facilities.

The U.S., South Korea and others believe North Korea seeks to receive sophisticated weapons technologies to enhance its nuclear program in exchange for its munitions supply.

During his visit to Pyongyang last week, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in a reception speech that Russia valued North Korea's "unwavering" support for its war on Ukraine. He also proposed regular security talks with North Korea and China to cope with what he described as increasing U.S.-led regional military threats.

Life & Style

Maria Callas is honored with a new museum in Greece

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Finishing her class at The Julliard School of the arts in New York, Greek opera great Maria Callas gave her students a final word of advice.

"Keep on going the proper way: Not with fireworks, not with easy applause, but with the expression of the words, the diction, and to really feel what you feel. That's what I want. I'm not good at words, so that's that."

The March 1972 speech was a detail little known to her admiring public, along with letters, jewelry and countless honors that include a postage stamp series from Kyrgyzstan and Congo.

Now they are on display. The City of Athens inaugurated the Maria Callas Museum in the center of the Greek capital Wednesday, marking a century since the birth to Greek parents of the legendary soprano in New York.

The museum, next to the city's cathedral and with a view of the Acropolis, opens to the public Thursday, with sections of the museum connected by a red carpet.

The top floors offer a recreated room of her Paris apartment, an imaginary forest and a sound studio, along with recordings of her famed live performances and clips of her lessons at The Julliard School.

Other display areas have exhibits of her costumes, handwritten letters and a sketch of a Callas-inspired Manolo Blahnik design.

"I think we are primarily addressing a person who is the ordinary visitor who might not know much about opera. They might know much about Maria Callas," museum supervisor Erato Koutsoudaki told The Associated Press.

"So we invite them to start with the spaces where you can listen and watch her perform iconic arias from the great operas. So you can just live it. Then you can learn more about who this woman was and why she was important, on the lowers floors that are more like a conventional museum."

Born Maria Kalogeropoulos, the singer made her professional debut in Athens as an 18-year-old student and died in Paris aged 53 after a career that some still consider to be unrivalled in opera.

Callas would have turned 100 on Dec. 2, and her life has been honored with a year of artistic events in Greece as well as the upcoming movie "Maria" starring Angelina Jolie.

Athens Mayor Kostas Bakoyannis at the museum's inauguration thanked the staff and private donors. Many started work on the project when it was conceived 24 years ago, bringing the collection together through auction purchases, donations from private collections and negotiations for display rights with recording companies.

"This is the first museum dedicated to Maria Callas that … combines technology with lived experience," the mayor said. "We welcome this museum with great joy and deep respect for the great diva."

Dozens of Vegas union workers arrested for blocking LV traffic as thousands rally

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Thousands of hotel workers fighting for new union contracts rallied on the Las Vegas Strip on Wednesday evening, halting rush-hour traffic before dozens were arrested for sitting in the street. The stepped-up labor unrest aimed to draw attention to negotiations with three major casino companies.

Seated in two separate circles, workers in red T-shirts blocked cars in both directions for roughly 30 minutes as the sun sank in the west, casting golden rays across one of the most recognizable stretches of the Strip near the Bellagio fountain, the Eiffel Tower replica and Caesars Palace. Police officers with zip ties eventually started taking protesters into custody, leading them to a white police bus with flashing red and blue lights.

Las Vegas police said 58 people were cited for assembling to disturb the peace, a misdemeanor.

"The event was peaceful," Lt. Mark Lourenco said via text message.

The Culinary Workers Union overwhelmingly voted last month to authorize a strike if they don't soon reach agreements with MGM Resorts International, Caesars Entertainment and Wynn Resorts.

The companies did not immediately respond to emailed requests for comment Wednesday.

It also comes at the same time casino workers in Michigan, including employees of the MGM Grand Detroit, are on strike.

Leaders of the Culinary Workers Union said they wanted a show of force ahead of any potential strike.

As the protest began, Kimberly Dopler, a cocktail server at Wynn Las Vegas since it opened in 2005, said she planned to halt traffic.

"I'm hoping that the companies will listen to us and realize that we're not joking. We're ready to walk out," she said.

Two visitors from Missouri, Cindy Hiatt and Michelle Shirley, watched as the rally began. They said they won't return to Las Vegas again during any potential strike by hotel workers.

"The hotels are going to have to realize that they're not going to have people wanting to come to Vegas without these workers," Hiatt said.

A Las Vegas strike deadline has not yet been set as the union and casino companies return to the bargaining table this week. But Ted Pappageorge, the union's secretary and treasurer, told reporters this month that thousands of workers who keep the Strip's hotel-casinos humming could walk off the job in the coming weeks if the latest round of negotiations aren't productive.

AP

A Las Vegas police officer arrests a member of the Culinary Workers Union along the Strip, Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023, in Las Vegas.

Lester Holt, Kristen Welker and Hugh Hewitt to moderate 3rd GOP presidential debate on Nov. 8

NEW YORK (AP)—Lester Holt, Kristen Welker and Hugh Hewitt will moderate the third Republican presidential debate, scheduled for Nov. 8 in Miami, NBC said Wednesday.

The first one held outside the confines of Fox News, the two-hour debate will be seen at 8 p.m. Eastern on NBC and the NBC News Now streaming service.

Holt is the anchor of "NBC Nightly News" and Welker is the moderator of "Meet the Press." Hewitt hosts a morning talk show for the Salem Radio Network, a co-sponsor of the debate.

Qualified participants will be announced later. Former President Donald Trump, leading in polls for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, skipped the first two debates and has given no indication he will be at any others.

Family has stuck together despite many differences

DEAR ABBY: I am one of nine children who all still get along. One sibling belongs to a religious order. At least one (for sure) is not a Christian. One is a born-again Christian. One of us is gay and married. We are not all of the same political persuasion. Yet somehow, after all these years, we have managed to get along and still gather for family fun, whether it's a holiday or just a cookout. We don't all live in the same state, but more often than not, most of us are there.

There's no secret to us still loving as well as liking each other. We simply respect each other's opinions and realize that although we don't always agree, it's not worth cutting out of our lives someone we have known "forever." I can't imagine losing even one sibling over a silly disagreement. That's not to say we haven't had arguments, because we have certainly had our share, but we simply take the high road and agree to disagree. I love my siblings with all my heart. Just wanted to share an uplifting note with you.

NO PROBLEMS HERE

DEAR NO PROBLEMS: Most of the mail I receive concerns relationships that fractured because of a lack of respect for someone's feelings. Thank you for your, frankly, refreshing letter. If more people emulated your family's example, this world would be a happier, less complicated place in which to live. I wish your attitude were contagious.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating "Paul" for several years. He lives about an hour away, and we see each other a few weekends a month. I know he loves me. A few months ago, his dog suddenly died from cancer. It was traumatic because "Bruiser" was his best friend.

Paul has been different since Bruiser's death. He has zero interest in anything physical. To me, touch is important—not just sex. There's shared intimacy in holding someone's hand or kissing. I feel like a plant that's wilting with no sun. I know Paul is struggling, but I don't know how to help him through. We talked about it once, but other than acknowledging he's struggling, he has done nothing further.

I don't want to force the issue, but time is precious. I know what it's like to struggle with depression, and I recognize the signs, but he won't get help. How can I support him through this and get over my selfishness?

IN THE DARK IN NEW YORK

DEAR IN THE DARK: Tell Paul you know he is hurting because since Bruiser's death, his behavior has changed. Explain that he may be depressed -- AND WITH GOOD REASON—and that it might help him to contact his veterinarian and ask if there are grief support groups for pet owners who have lost their furry family member. His vet may be able to suggest one or more. However, if that doesn't appeal to Paul, he should consider talking to his doctor because he is exhibiting some classic signs of depression. After that, the ball's in his court.

■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren

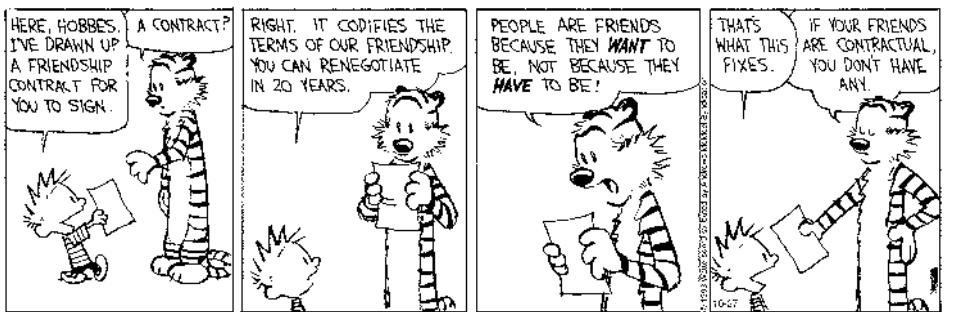
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HERE, HOBBES. I'VE DRAWN UP A FRIENDSHIP CONTRACT FOR YOU TO SIGN.
A CONTRACT?
RIGHT. IT CODIFIES THE TERMS OF OUR FRIENDSHIP. YOU CAN RENEGOTIATE IN 20 YEARS.
PEOPLE ARE FRIENDS BECAUSE THEY WANT TO BE, NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO BE!
THAT'S WHAT THIS FIXES.
IF YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONTRACTUAL, YOU DON'T HAVE ANY.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

SHE HAS TO BE PLOTTING SOMETHING. I KNOW IT.
I SCARED HER SO BAD SHE SQUEEZED HER JUICE BOX ALL OVER HERSELF.
WHAT WILL HER REVENGE BE? WHEN WILL IT COME?
GET IT OVER WITH, DEMONSPAWN!
HARRELL

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Wrestling surface
4 Rain-delay cover
8 Graph line
12 Pub order
13 Mideast ruler
14 Queen of Carthage
15 Bama fan's cheer
17 Cameo shape
18 Orchestral instruments
19 Deli creation
21 Reply (Abbr.)
22 "Whatever works"
26 Lathers
29 Secret-protecting doc.
30 That girl
31 Moth variety
32 Pool stick
33 Hearty dish
34 Dye type
35 Sailor
36 Hen pens
37 Chocolate-coated treat
39 Day light
40 Gut-punch reaction
41 Noah's landfall
45 Syringe, for short
48 Calmly
50 Tech whiz
51 Wonka's creator
52 Water tester
53 Tiny amounts
54 Online auction site
55 Ninny

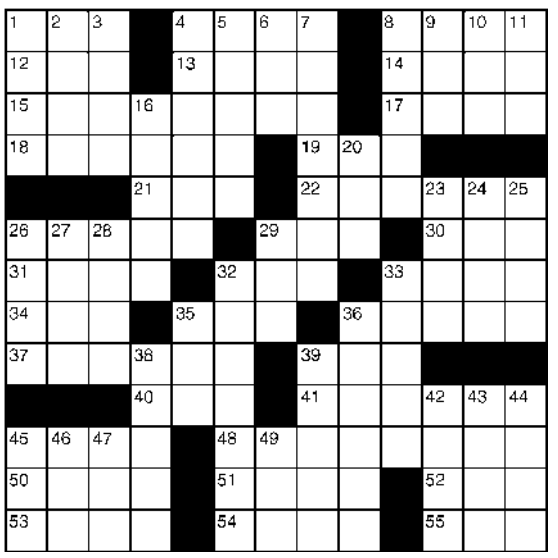
DOWN

1 Artist Chagall
2 Lotion additive
3 Snitch
4 Wyoming range
5 Out of whack
6 Free (of)
7 Officiate
8 Photoshop maker
9 VII doubled
10 Hollywood's Lupino
11 Fa follower
16 Andean beast
20 Ms. Thurman
23 Regarding
24 News anchor Smith
25 Evergreens
26 Exerciser's target
27 Greek liqueur
28 Shortly
29 Gist
32 Trust (in)
33 Sub detector
35 Sticky stuff
36 In a terse manner
38 Library collection
39 Former First Daughter
42 Ms. Hayworth
43 Big fusses
44 Golf props
45 Elev.
46 Pro vote
47 Walker, on a sign
49 Arrest

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	O	N	S		B	U	S	H		P	H	D
I	G	E	T		U	N	T	O		C	A	R
P	L	A	Y	G	R	O	U	P		C	R	A
S	E	L	L	E	R			E	G	R	E	T
			U	M		Y	A	D	I	G		
B	O	P	S		S	A	M		N	Y	F	T
B	A	R			C	H	A			N	O	S
C	R	O	C		A	O	L		S	T	E	P
		M	A	C	R	O		J	O			
C	O	G	M	A			C	U	R	D	L	E
O	D	O		P	I	N	E	G	R	E	E	N
L	O	W		L	V	I	L		O	M	N	I
E	H	N		S	E	A	I		W	C	O	D

Yesterday's answer 10-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kelly Osbourne, 39; Patrick Fugit, 41; Peter Firth, 70; John Cleese, 84.

Happy Birthday: Completion is the challenge, and stamina and ingenuity are the answers. Use your imagination, and you'll find inroads to achieving what you want this year. Don't cloud your vision with outside influences. Stick to the game plan, and don't look up until you are confident you have everything in place. Change will lead to satisfaction and the place you want to call home. Create your dream and turn it into a reality. Your numbers are 8, 19, 26, 31, 37, 45, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Stay within bounds, or someone will take an offensive position. It's best to go under the radar, put everything in place and then use a discreet way to enforce your offer. Timing, commitment and appeal will necessitate triumph. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* It's up to you to exhibit positive change; if you let someone else act on your behalf, you won't get what you want. Communication is vital, and mapping out what you want to accomplish will speed up the process. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Watch your back. Someone you least expect will disrupt your life by putting you in an awkward position. Play fair and point out anyone who isn't abiding by the rules. Distance yourself from anyone trying to take over. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Choose your cohorts carefully. Someone will trick you into something using emotional blackmail if you aren't careful. Stay one step ahead and devise a cost-efficient and unique plan to keep disruptive people out of your orbit. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Someone will try to derail your progress. Learn as you go and use experience to protect your rights, skills and plans. Revisit your options and choose what offers the greatest freedom to do as you please. Walk away from confrontations that serve no purpose. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Go it alone. Don't rely on others or allow anyone to interrupt your plans. Implement the changes that lead to opportunity and take care of matters personally. Honesty is vital if you want to build respect and a following. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Pull from all your resources, process what you have to work with and concentrate on reaching your destination. Don't take time out to examine what others are up to. The race is with yourself, not others. Be and do your best. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Apply energy where it counts. Go above and beyond the call of duty, and you'll gain acceptance into the inner circle. A show of diversity will buy you time and approval from someone who impacts you. A partnership will enhance opportunities. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Sit tight, and don't let anyone talk you into something unnecessary. Pay attention to domestic issues and your emotional well-being. Dedicate time to research regarding ailments or weak links in your life that need updating. Take it slow and do things meticulously. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Refuse to let anyone use emotional manipulation to slow you down. Move forward and adjust what isn't working for you anymore. A change at home will give you the boost you need to initiate opportunities instead of waiting for them to come to you. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Pay attention to money coming in and going out. Keep your finances separate and decline joint ventures that can leave you paying for things you don't want. Extravagance and overindulgence will leave a dent in your wallet and your ego. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Focus; don't fuss or invite interference. Take advantage of a chance to get ahead or to invest in whatever brings you joy. A partnership will take a positive turn; be ready to take advantage of the situation. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are dedicated, possessive and innovative. You are persistent and reliable.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				4				
6	7				3	1		
				7	9			2
9	1				6			
	4	6		2	7	5		
		4	2					3
5		8				2		
	3				1		8	

Difficulty: ★★★★ 10/27

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	7	6	8	5	9	3	2	4
4	5	8	1	2	3	6	7	9
2	9	3	7	6	4	1	5	8
8	4	5	6	9	2	7	3	1
3	2	1	5	4	7	8	9	6
9	6	7	3	8	1	2	4	5
5	3	9	2	1	8	4	6	7
7	8	4	9	3	6	5	1	2
6	1	2	4	7	5	9	8	3

Difficulty: ★★★ 10/26

©2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

GPS TRILATERATION Solution: 5 letters

S	E	T	A	N	I	D	R	O	O	C	A	T	A	D
S	U	R	V	E	Y	T	I	C	O	L	E	V	N	I
C	H	R	E	T	N	E	C	C	E	C	R	O	F	M
I	E	T	F	S	N	C	I	N	D	I	I	N	O	E
F	T	R	A	A	O	R	O	I	D	T	N	O	R	N
I	U	I	L	M	C	I	R	E	A	P	T	I	M	S
C	O	P	P	L	T	E	E	T	D	R	E	T	U	I
E	R	A	E	A	C	M	R	I	U	A	R	A	L	O
P	S	U	V	T	I	O	S	N	R	T	N	U	A	N
S	H	E	I	T	P	T	I	A	O	E	E	Q	N	C
R	L	O	I	S	A	T	E	L	L	I	T	E	D	P
E	N	B	N	N	E	L	E	V	A	R	T	A	E	A
W	R	A	C	E	Y	C	A	R	U	C	C	A	W	T
O	R	E	C	E	P	T	I	O	N	E	A	R	T	H
T	C	E	S	R	E	T	N	I	L	A	N	G	I	S

©2025 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 10/27

Accuracy, Center, Circle, Compass, Coordinates, Cruise, Data, Dimension, Direction, Distance, Earth, Elevation, Equation, Force, Formula, Internet, Intersect, Land, Math, Orbit, Path, Phone, Plane, Rate, Reception, Ride, Route, Satellite, Signal, Specific, Station, Surface, Survey, Time, Tower, Transportation, Travel, Trip, Unit, Velocity, Water

Yesterday's Answer: Bourbon Street

The NEW **TELEWORD VINTAGE COLLECTION EDITION #1** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Doncic, Mavs spoil Wembanyama's debut, beat Spurs

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Luka Doncic had 33 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists and the Dallas Mavericks spoiled the NBA debut of No. 1 draft pick Victor Wembanyama, beating the San Antonio Spurs 126-119 on Wednesday night.

"It was fun," Doncic said. "We knew the whole building was going to be loud. He's probably one of the best prospects to enter the NBA. It was fun. For me, personally, I love challenges. So, that was a fun challenge."

Dallas forced two turnovers in the final minute to preserve the victory. Mavericks guard Kyrie Irving added 22 points and Grant Williams added 17 points in the season opener for both teams.

"It was a hall of fame performance like (Doncic) does almost every night," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said. "He was great. Kyrie wasn't bad either. So, the two future hall of famers got us."

Doncic was cleared to play an hour before tipoff after being listed as questionable with a left calf sprain, and the All-Star guard played 32 minutes.

Devin Vassell had 23 points to lead San Antonio. Keldon Johnson added 17 and Wembanyama had 15 points.

Wembanyama scored nine points in the final seven minutes after struggling with foul trouble in the fourth quarter. The rookie was 6 for 9 from the field and had five rebounds and two assists and a block in 23 minutes.

"One of the toughest things for a player is you get into foul trouble," Popovich said. "You never get in a rhythm and you're in and out of the game and that sort of thing. So, I thought his maturity showed even at a young age where he came in with the last, I think, seven minutes and just played."

The Spurs started quickly, outscoring the Mavericks 43-36 in the opening quarter. San Antonio shot 6 for 12 on 3-pointers and shot 62% from the field.

Dallas responded by controlling the second half.

"We just locked down on it," Dallas rookie center Dereck Lively II said. "We feel like there were a lot of long rebounds (and) a lot of missed opportunities. There was miscommunication (and) a lot of back door cuts and cuts to the rim. I feel as the game went on, we were just making sure we were locked down on that so that we could be able to walk out with a win."

Wembanyama dazzled in the preseason, but he never battled foul trouble as he did against the Mavericks.

"For me, it was just a matter of being physical," Williams said. "Make sure he doesn't get to his spots, making sure that any shot that he takes you challenge and you swipe so you affect the shot even down low. Just playing with great energy and physicality so he feels off balance a little bit."

And Dallas took advantage.

AP

Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic, left, reacts to a score against the San Antonio Spurs during the first half of an NBA basketball game in San Antonio, Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023.

PACERS 143, WIZARDS 120

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Bruce Brown scored 24 points and made a career-high six 3-pointers in his Pacers debut, leading Indiana to a record-breaking victory over Washington.

It was the highest scoring total for a season opener in team history, surpassing the 140 they had against Brooklyn in 2017. Indiana fell two points short of setting the franchise scoring mark for points in a home game.

All-Star guard Tyrese Haliburton had 20 points and 11 assists as eight Pacers had double-digit scoring totals.

For Washington, it was an ugly start to the post-Bradley Beal era. While The Wizards led 39-34 after one quarter, they fell apart offensively over the final three and got overstretched defensively.

Kyle Kuzma scored 25 points and Jordan Poole added 18 as Washington was 9 of 24 on 3s.

MAGIC 116, ROCKETS 86

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Cole Anthony had 20 points and eight rebounds, and Orlando beat Houston in the season opener for both teams.

Anthony went 8 for 12 from the field and played 24 minutes in a reserve role. Franz Wagner scored 17 points for Orlando, and Paolo Banchero finished with 12 points, five rebounds and five assists.

Fred VanVleet and Dillon Brooks each scored 14 points in their first game with Houston. Center Alperen Senguin added 14 points, eight rebounds and six assists.

HORNETS 116, HAWKS 110

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—P.J. Washington scored 25 points, rookie Brandon Miller provided a huge spark with eight of his 13 points in the fourth quarter and Charlotte held on to defeat Atlanta.

Terry Rozier added 24 points for the Hornets and LaMelo Ball shook off a rough first half and finished with 15 points and 10 assists. Mark Williams chipped in with 13 points and 15 rebounds for Charlotte.

Trae Young had 23 points to lead the Hawks, but shot 1 for 9 from 3-point range. Jalen Johnson had a career-high 21 points.

CELTICS 108, KNICKS 104

NEW YORK (AP)—Kristaps Porzingis made a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 1:29 left and scored 30 points in a strong Celtics debut, Jayson Tatum had 34 points and 11 rebounds and Boston defeated New York.

Porzingis finished with eight rebounds and four blocked shots against his original NBA team, showing why his new one is considered one of the NBA Finals favorites after acquiring the 7-foot-3 center and Jrue Holiday during the offseason.

Holiday scored nine points. Derrick White had 12 for the Celtics, and Jaylen Brown had 11 points, six rebounds and five assists.

RJ Barrett and Immanuel Quickley each scored 24 points for the Knicks, who started slowly but opened the fourth quarter with a 13-2 run to take their first lead of the game. They couldn't hold on against one of the NBA's best teams.

RAPTORS 97, TIMBERWOLVES 94

TORONTO (AP)—Dennis Schroder scored 22 points in his Toronto debut, O.G. Anunoby had 20 and the Raptors gave new coach Darko Rajakovic a victory in his first game by beating Minnesota.

Scottie Barnes had 17 points, Pascal Siakam added 15 and Jakob Poeltl grabbed 11 rebounds for the Raptors.

Anthony Edwards had 26 points and 14 rebounds, and Rudy Gobert added 15 points and 13 rebounds, but Minnesota lost its 19th straight north of the border.

Karl-Anthony Towns finished with 19 points and 10 rebounds, and Mike Conley scored 11 for the Timberwolves. Towns shot 8 for 25, going 2 of 10 from 3-point range.

HEAT 103, PISTONS 102

MIAMI (AP)—Bam Adebayo scored 22 points, Jimmy Butler finished with 19 points and 13 rebounds and Miami held off Detroit in the season opener for both clubs.

Tyler Herro scored 16 points, Duncan Robinson added 15 and Kevin Love had 13 points and 10 rebounds for the Heat—who led by 19 with 9:07 left, wasted almost all of it and went scoreless in the final 2:57.

Cade Cunningham had 30 points and nine assists for the Pistons. Jalen Duren had 17 points, 14 rebounds, four assists and four blocks for Detroit, Isaiah Stewart had 14 points and 14 rebounds and Killian Hayes scored 10.

Detroit inbounded the ball to Cunningham with 2.5 seconds left, but his well-defended 30-footer missed as time expired.

Miami improved to 20-16 all-time in openers, 10-6 under coach Erik Spoelstra. Detroit fell to 38-40 in openers, and dropped the first game of the Monty Williams coaching era with the Pistons.

CAVALIERS 114, NETS 113

NEW YORK (AP)—Donovan Mitchell scored 10 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, and Cleveland beat Brooklyn for its first road win in a season opener since 2000.

Cleveland had six players score in double figures. Max Strus, who started in place of injured center Jarrett Allen, had 27 points and 12 rebounds. Isaac Okoro scored 18 points, and Darius Garland finished with 15.

Cam Thomas scored 36 for Brooklyn, setting a league record for most points for a reserve in a season opener. Mikal Bridges scored 11 of his 20 in the fourth quarter. Cam Johnson had 12 points, and Ben Simmons finished with four points, 10 rebounds and nine assists.

THUNDER 124, BULLS 104

CHICAGO (AP)—Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 31 points and Oklahoma City beat Chicago in the season opener.

Fourth in the NBA in scoring last season, Gilgeous-Alexander keyed a 12-0 run late in the third quarter that broke open a one-point game. Josh Giddey and Rookie of the Year runner-up Jalen Williams each scored 16 for Oklahoma City.

Chet Holmgren had 11 points in his long-awaited NBA debut. Isaiah Joe led a strong effort by the bench with 14 points, and Oklahoma City's reserves outscored Chicago's 42-34.

DeMar DeRozan led the Bulls with 20 points. Zach LaVine scored all of his 16 points in the second half. Coby White scored 15, and Nikola Vucevic added 11 points and nine rebounds for Chicago.

PELICANS 111, GRIZZLIES 104

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—CJ McCollum scored 24 points, Zion Williamson added 23 points and seven rebounds as New Orleans defeated Memphis.

McCollum was 8 of 16 from the field including 6 of 11 from outside the arc. Williamson scored 12 of his points in the fourth quarter to avoid any comeback by Memphis. Brandon Ingram finished with 19 points and Jonas Valanciunas added 12 points and 12 rebounds.

Desmond Bane led Memphis with 31 points, while Marcus Smart had 17 points. Xavier Tillman matched Smart's 17 points and added 12 rebounds.

The game was the first of the 25-game suspension for Grizzles guard Ja Morant, the team's leading scorer last season. He is scheduled to finish the suspension in December. His absence, along with several injuries across the Memphis frontline left the Grizzlies at a disadvantage.

KINGS 130, JAZZ 114

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Harrison Barnes scored 33 points and Domantas Sabonis added 22 points and 12 rebounds to lead Sacramento over Utah.

De'Aaron Fox chipped in 18 points for the Kings, and Malik Monk dished out a team-high seven assists off the bench.

Jordan Clarkson led the Jazz with 24 points and six assists. Lauri Markkanen tallied 18 points and 10 rebounds and John Collins finished with 15 points and 11 rebounds in his Utah debut.

The Jazz had won six straight season openers before falling at home Wednesday night. Utah has now dropped four of its last five regular season games against Sacramento.

CLIPPERS 123, TRAIL BLAZERS 111

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Paul George scored 27 points and Kawhi Leonard added 23 to lead five players in double figures as Los Angeles beat Portland in their season opener.

The Clippers had Leonard and George together for just 38 games last season, when both were derailed by injuries and the team lost in the first round of the playoffs. But they're healthy and in the lineup at the same time now, raising expectations for the Clippers as they pursue the franchise's first NBA championship.

Ivica Zubac had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and Russell Westbrook added 11 points and 13 assists—making him the first Clippers player with at least 10 assists in a season opener since Chris Paul in October 2015.

Malcolm Brogdon scored 20 points off the bench to lead the Blazers. Anfernee Simons added 18 points and Deandre Ayton had 12 rebounds while in foul trouble most of the game. The Blazers had six players in double figures.

D-backs' Lovullo, Hazen navigated difficult years en route to World Series

PHOENIX (AP)—Some say the Arizona Diamondbacks are ahead of schedule, advancing to the World Series with a young roster that was supposed to need a few more years of seasoning before hitting the sport's biggest stage.

Manager Torey Lovullo and general manager Mike Hazen have a different perspective.

The two friends and colleagues have navigated a difficult five years—both personally and professionally—that have made the D-backs' improbable run to the Fall Classic even sweeter.

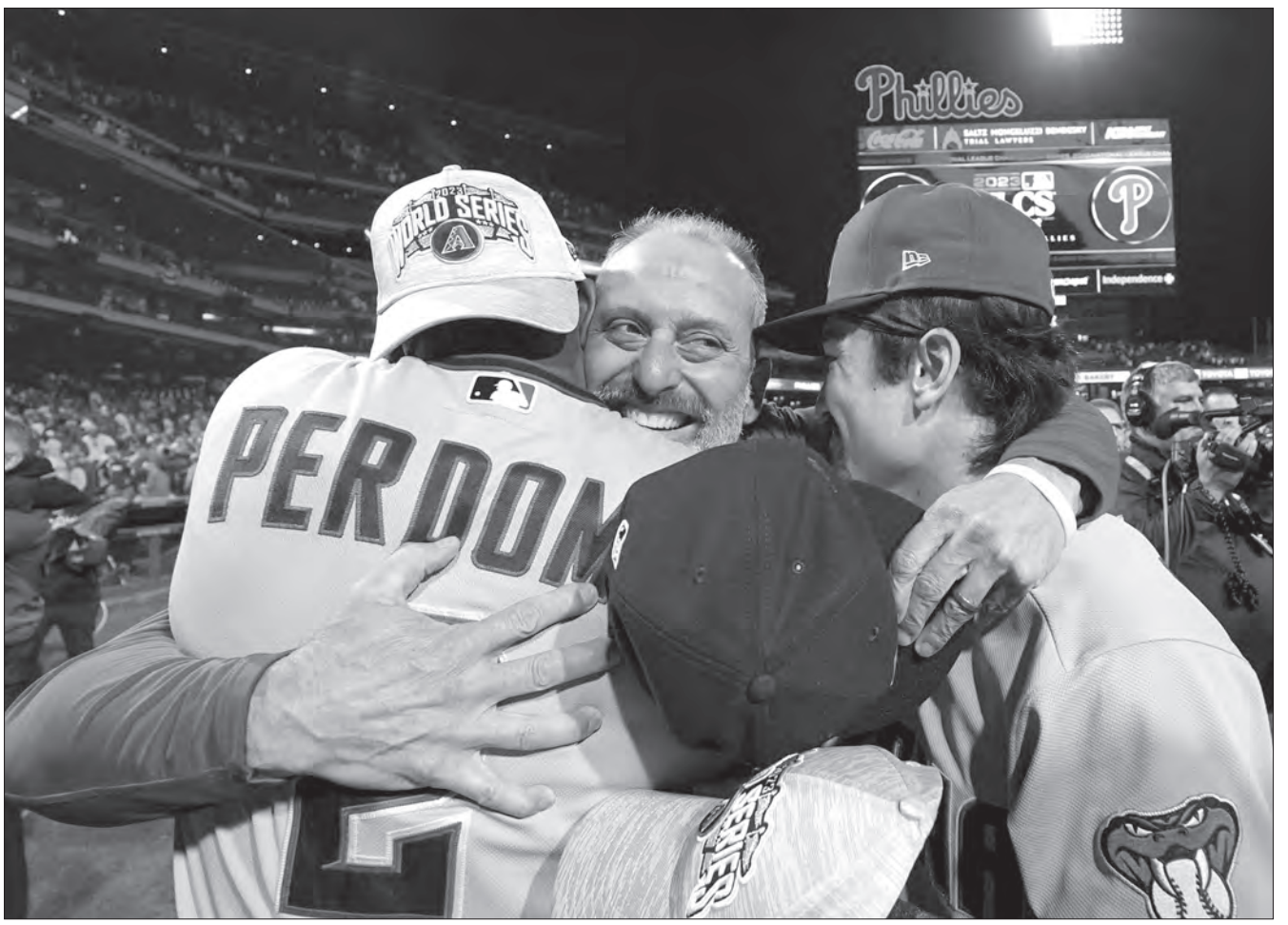
Game 1 against the Texas Rangers in Friday night in Arlington, Texas.

"Trust me when I say there were some real hardships," Lovullo said on Tuesday night after the D-backs beat the Phillies 4-2 in Game 7 of the NLCS. "There were some very dark days in my career. We lost 110 games two years ago."

The Diamondbacks had a 52-110 record just two seasons ago, sinking to the cellar of the NL West in ugly fashion. A couple rough seasons during a rebuild is common in baseball in these days, but Arizona's nadir felt even worse in the sense that the franchise wasn't even trying to tank.

They were just terrible.

Arizona occupies a middle space in today's baseball economy — it's not really a small-market team, but it doesn't spend like the Mets, Yankees or Dodgers. There isn't much room for error when doling out sizable contracts.



AP

The Arizona Diamondbacks manager Torey Lovullo hugs Geraldo Perdomo and Corbin Carroll after their win against the Philadelphia Phillies in Game 7 of the baseball NL Championship Series in Philadelphia Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2023.

Prior to the 2020 season, they gave an $85 million, five-year deal to veteran lefty Madison Bumgarner that didn't pan out. Smaller contracts in 2021 for veteran relievers like Joakim Soria and Tyler Clippard were essentially a sunk cost, too. Some of the team's younger players like Ketel Marte and Christian Walker regressed.

And then the players the organization let go often seemed to blossom. They dealt lefty Robbie Ray to the Blue Jays in 2020, and he went on to win a Cy Young Award with Toronto in 2021.

The D-backs were cursed with a reverse Midas touch.

Arizona's president, CEO and general partner Derrick Hall admits that earlier in his career, he might have made a change. But Hall said he "had a hunch" that his patience would be rewarded if he stuck with Hazen and Lovullo.

"We have always had great confidence in both," Hall said. "Mike has had a plan and we believed he deserved the time to see it play out. And Torey keeps getting better and better. He is a players' manager and those guys love playing for him."

There was also personal tragedy mixed into those tough seasons. Nicole Hazen—the GM's wife—was diagnosed with glioblastoma in 2020 and fought the brain cancer for more than two years. She was 45 when she died.

Mike Hazen took a partial leave of absence during the 2021 season, spending more time at home to care for his wife and the couple's four sons. Before Game 3 of this year's NL Division Series, Charlie (17), John (16), Teddy (15) and Sam (13) all threw out the ceremonial first pitch in honor of their mom.

Lovullo—who is close with Hazen's family—exchanged hugs with the boys on the field after the first pitches.

When the D-backs clinched a spot in the playoffs on Sept. 30, Mike Hazen admitted the emotions were still raw.

"It has been long. A lot of stuff has happened," Hazen said. "There is somebody for me that is not here that was here six years ago that was a huge Diamondbacks fan. Was a huge Merrill Kelly fan. He was her favorite player."

Kelly pitched a gem in Game 6 during the recently-finished NLCS, providing a gutsy road win that set the stage for the team's Game 7 triumph. Kelly's emergence is one of many shrewd moves Hazen made over the years that slowly started to pan out. The veteran right-hander was pitching in South Korea before the D-backs brought him back to MLB in 2019.

Hazen's made several moves since that ugly 2021 season—particulary in the past 12 months—that have been vital. He traded rising star Daulton Varsho to the Blue Jays in exchange for catcher Gabriel Moreno and outfielder Lourdes Gurriel Jr., who both immediately became important pieces.

He inked veteran three-time All-Star Evan Longoria to a $4 million, one-year deal to help bring leadership to a young clubhouse. He also traded for closer Paul Sewald and outfielder Tommy Pham at the trade deadline, with both providing big moments. Sewald, in particular, has been brilliant in these playoffs, throwing eight scoreless innings and converting all six save opportunties.

And maybe most importantly, Hazen had the foresight to sign rookie Corbin Carroll to an $111 million, eight-year deal during spring training, cementing the 23-year-old as the team's main building block. Carroll rewarded the franchise's confidence with a brilliant year and is favorite to win the NL Rookie of the Year award after finishing with 30 doubles, 25 homers, 10 triples and 54 stolen bases.

Two years after nothing went right, everything has gone right.

Now the D-backs are four wins from winning a World Series for just the second time in franchise history.

"I won't speak for other people, but I thought it would take a little more time," Carroll said. "So to be able to do it in this first year just makes it all the more special."

Rangers now focus on playing as well at home vs Arizona as they have on road

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—The Texas Rangers have played only four home games over the past month, and lost all three in the AL Championship Series.

Yet, there they were back at Globe Life Field on Wednesday getting ready to host Game 1 of the World Series against the Arizona Diamondbacks.

So is it really home-field advantage for a team that's already matched a postseason record by winning its first eight road games?

"We love playing here," All-Star catcher Jonah Heim said before the Rangers worked out. "Throughout the whole year, we've played pretty good at home."

Except against the Houston Astros, which is why the Rangers went into these playoffs as a wild-card team that didn't have home-field advantage until now.

Game 1 is Friday night in the retractable-roof stadium that hosted MLB's neutral-site World Series in 2020, the first year the ballpark opened.

Texas and Arizona both had to win Games 6 and 7 of their respective League Championship Series on the road to get to the World Series. That had never happened in both LCS matchups since those series expanded to a best-of-seven format in 1985. But it set up the third World Series matching wild-card teams.

"We've both played in tough environments. It's kind of been the theme all postseason of the road teams have been playing really well," Texas second baseman Marcus Semien said. "That's just how it's gone this year for whatever reason. But the focus now for us is playing well at home."

Take away the Rangers' 1-9 record at home this season against Houston, including those ALCS games last week, and they are 50-25 against everybody else they've hosted. They won their only other playoff game at Globe Life Field, completing a three-game sweep of Baltimore in the Division Series.

Arizona, which clinched the NL pennant Tuesday night in Philadelphia, split its quick two-game set at Texas in early May.

The Rangers have home-field advantage in the World Series because their 90 wins in the regular season were six more than Arizona had. They would have also had it against Philadelphia, which won 90 games but was swept in three games at Globe Life Field in the very first series this season for last year's NL champions.

Houston had 90 wins as well, but took the AL West title on a head-to-head tiebreaker because of its 9-4 mark against the Rangers during the regular season. The Astros won six of seven in Arlington, including a three-game sweep in September when they homered 16 times while outscoring Texas 39-10. And they needed every one of those wins to force the tiebreaker scenario.

When the Rangers played their regular-season home finale Sept. 24, they had seven road games left and controlled their own playoff destiny. But they went 3-4 on that final trip, losing 1-0 at Seattle on the final day of the season to squander the division crown to Houston.

Texas then had to fly coast-to-coast, going over North Texas along the way, but swept Tampa Bay in a best-of-three Wild Card Series before traveling up the East Coast to face the Orioles for two games. Then came the Lone Star State rematch with the Astros that became the second best-of-seven postseason series in which the visiting team won every game — the other was Houston's loss to Washington in the 2019 World Series.

"It was tough. It was rough for us," rookie third baseman Josh Jung said of that last trip before the playoffs. "I don't know what switched or what turned on. But it was just this mentality that we were kind of playing hero ball in Seattle.

"Where you see it this postseason, it's just pass the baton to the next guy. Have the best at-bat you can, the next guy's going to do it. We're not worried about being the hero."

The Diamondbacks, who lost all three games at home to Houston in the final series of the regular season, also quickly turned things around in the postseason. They also swept through their first two playoff rounds, winning both games in the wild-card round at NL Central champion Milwaukee before winning twice in Los Angeles and then wrapping up the Division Series at home against the 100-win Dodgers.

Texas was 50-31 at Globe Life Field during the regular season, with only Tampa Bay, the Dodgers and Atlanta winning more home games.

"Once we saw what the NLCS matchup was, we knew if we win our pennant we get home field, and here we are," Semien said. "It's great for the fans. It's great for us. We've learned throughout the losses in the (ALCS) that maybe we need to keep our emotions a little calmer in the big moments. Because the fans expect a lot out of us, and the home crowds throughout the playoffs expect the home players to do big things."

Undefeated FMS, ACS lead IT&E boys caging

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Defending champs Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Napu Riders and Agape Christian School Torchbearers ended the regular season with a perfect 8-0 record each after defeating their foes in the last regular season game of the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium Wednesday night.

The Napu Riders had a tough showing against neighboring Hopwood Middle School Hilitais but came out to win, 28-20.

The Hilitais were once undefeated and tried to end the regular season strong, but the Napu Riders' made sure to keep their streak alive. With HMS Down, 15-21, FMS' Dezmon Camacho lengthened the lead with a 3-pointer to make it 15-24.

HMS began rushing their plays and tried to intercept with quick hands and footwork, which paid off as Jequinn Lizama made it 17-24. With about less than two minutes left on the clock, HMS' Jericho Manuel went big with a shot from 3-point territory to close in, 20-24.

LEIGH GASES

Francisco M. Sablan Middle School's Abraham Saralu wrestles the ball away from Hopwood Middle School's Evan Cabrera during their last regular season game of the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium Wednesday night.

But the Napu Riders, with less than 30 seconds left, made sure to keep possession as Keith Agulto took them home with back-to-back field goals to win by eight points.

The Torchbearers had it easier against HMS JV, 38-9.

ACS' Raffy Cai led the team with 21 points, while he was assisted by Daniel Yang's 5 points, Danny Cheng's 4, and Benny Li, Reyviel Escarlan, and Huaen Chen's 2 points each.

In other results, Dandan Middle School took down ChaCha Ocean View Middle School, 36-26; Tanapag Middle School pummeled Mount Carmel School JV, 37-14; and Saipan International School won a close game against Saipan Community School, 23-21.

HMS ended the season with a 7-2 record; DMS and MCS were at 5-3; COVMS was at 4-4; TMS was 3-5; SIS was 2-7; and SCS was 0-8.

Last night was the start of the championship tournament. The championship round is set for this Saturday, Oct. 28 at 12:30pm.

Fast starts by Chiefs, Eagles raise possibility of rare Super Bowl rematch

By JOSH DUBOW
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Kansas City and Philadelphia are setting the stage for the possibility of a rare Super Bowl rematch.

The Chiefs and Eagles both have won six of their first seven games and are tied for the best record in the NFL.

This is just the sixth time that the two teams that played in the Super Bowl the previous season are tied for the league's best record entering Week 8 or later.

The last time it happened was going into Week 12 of the 2000 season when the Titans and Rams were both 8-2. Neither team ended up making the Super Bowl, with Tennessee losing in the divisional round and St. Louis in the wild-card round.

It also happened in 1993 when Buffalo and Dallas finished the season tied for the best record at 12-4 a year after playing in the Super Bowl. They met again in the Super Bowl that season, with the Cowboys repeating as champions in the only time the same two teams met in the Super Bowl in back-to-back seasons.

The win over the Chargers gave the Chiefs a three-game lead in the AFC West—just the fourth time in the past 10 seasons that has happened after seven weeks.

Kansas City already has won division games against Denver and the Chargers to improve to 29-3 against division opponents with Patrick Mahomes at quarterback. Mahomes' .906 winning percentage in the division is the best of any QB since the merger with at least 20 starts, far outdistancing Dak Prescott's .800 mark for Dallas against the NFC East.

AP

Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) throws as Los Angeles Chargers defensive tackle Scott Matlock (99) defends during the first half of an NFL football game Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo.

The 28-year-old Mahomes had his sixth career game in the regular season or playoffs with at least 400 yards passing and four TDs. The only players with more in NFL history are Peyton Manning (nine) and Dan Marino (eight).

The Eagles got to 6-1 by beating Miami 31-17. Receiver A.J. Brown had his fifth straight game with at least 125 yards receiving, tying Calvin Johnson (2012) and Pat Studstill (1966) for the longest streaks ever.

SACK DANCE

Washington's Sam Howell keeps taking sacks at a record-setting pace.

Howell was sacked six times in a loss to the Giants on Sunday. Howell has been sacked at least four times in every game this season. That's one shy of the longest streak since the merger held by Deshaun Watson (2018-19), Jeff George (1997-98) and Blake Bortles (2014-15).

Howell's 40 sacks are the second most through seven games since the merger, trailing only David Carr's 43 for the expansion Houston Texans in 2002. Carr set the NFL record for sacks that season with 76.

IRON MAN

Maxx Crosby's impressive iron-man streak came to an end for the Raiders.

Crosby had played 267 consecutive defensive snaps for Las Vegas before coming off the field for two kneel downs at the end of a loss to the Bears.

Crosby hadn't missed a snap since Week 3 against the Chargers, with his three-game streak the longest for a defensive lineman since Chandler Jones did it five straight games for Arizona in 2017, according to Sportradar.

Since the start of the 2022 season, there have been nine games when a defensive lineman played every defensive snap, with Crosby having seven of those games. Aaron Donald and Greg Gaines each have one.

RECORD CHASER

New England coach Bill Belichick joined some elite company when he won his 300th regular-season game, joining Don Shula (328) and George Halas (318) as the only coaches ever to hit that milestone.

The NFL record for coaching wins including the postseason has Belichick currently trailing Shula 347-331. He also has lost 170 games—eight fewer than Tom Landry for the most ever.

UNDRAFTED MATCHUP

The Bears and Raiders had a rare game with two undrafted quarterbacks.

Rookie Tyson Bagent came out on top for Chicago, besting Brian Hoyer in the first game featuring two undrafted starting quarterbacks since Nick Mullens and San Francisco beat Case Keenum and Denver 20-14 on Dec. 9, 2018.

Bagent, who played at Division II Shepherd University, became just the third undrafted rookie quarterback to win his first start in the past 10 seasons, joining Devlin Hodges in 2019 and Kyle Allen in 2018.

The 38-year-old Hoyer extended his losing streak as a starter to 13 games—tied for the eighth longest since the merger. Hoyer hasn't won a start since Oct. 2, 2016, for the Bears. Bagent became the 106th quarterback to win a start more recently than Hoyer.

The game also put Hoyer into sole possession of second place by starting with his eighth franchise—one behind Ryan Fitzpatrick's record.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Run Saipan Zombie 5K tomorrow night

Wear your spookiest costumes as you run and weave through "zombies" in the 2nd Annual Run Saipan Zombie 5K at the Garapan Fishing Base at 6pm tomorrow night.

This time around, instead of "zombie runners," the difference is there will be zombies strategically waiting to ambush runners throughout the Beach Road pathway.

"If you're afraid of jump scares in the dark, this is the perfect race to conquer your fears!" said Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr.

On how many he's expecting to take on the course, he said," I'm expecting less than 30 because I know people don't have the guts to run a zombie-infested course in the dark on Saipan. I dare anyone to prove me wrong."

There are two sponsors this year—The Athlete's Foot and All Star Sporting Goods, but the prizes are a surprise. "This will be our first time initiating a Halloween costume theme," said Dela Cruz.

"Special thanks to All Star and Athlete's Foot for sponsoring our first time Halloween costume prizes", said Dela Cruz.

Register now at https://raceroster.com/events/2023/70411/run-saipan-zombie-5k

Last year's race was a staggered Beach Road 5K and impromptu zombie run.

Division 1 winners were led by Paul Khang, who finished the race in 25:51. Leo Wania and Kamron Pangelinan came second and third after crossing the finish line in 26:41 and 28:47, respectively.

For the women, Lovel Spaeth and Leilani Ruszala finished in a dead heat (26:42) with Kathy Ruszala coming in third (27:05).

Caleb Cui paced Division 2 winners with his time of 21:44 followed by Adam Walsh's 24:26 and Frank "The Crank" Camacho's 24:33.

Rosemarie Chisato topped the women in the group with a time of 25:05, followed by Terra Allen (25:38) and Ann Bang (26:44).

Division 3 winner was Samuel Zhu who clocked in at 19:35 with Pony Tang and Rex Pixley in his coattails with times of 19:37 and 19:39, respectively.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Run Saipan's first Zombie 5K winners pose for a photo during an awarding ceremony at the Beach Road Pathway in front of the Oleai Beach Bar & Grill.

NABORS

From page 24

it feels great to show my culture out there. I dedicate this win to my family and friends who believed in me," said the 18-year-old Keith Jr. after his win.

Finishing third was Joe Raymond Dela Cruz with 9 points followed by K.J. Nabors (6 points), Ayuyu (3 points) and Collin and Cody with 2 points each.

In the youth division, KyMani turned the tables on eventual runner-up Roque Camacho in the last two rounds to win the championship.

Camacho started out with 3 points as opposed to KyMani's 2-point bullseye. The latter, however, was eagle-eyed in the second round by scoring 4 more points before capping it off with 5 points in the final round for a total of 9 points, including a couple of bullseyes. Camacho settled for second place with his 5 points, while Chad Palacios placed third with 3 points. Galyug Untalan wound up with 2 points, while the fifth competitor was Rickson Mangloña.

"It feels amazing to win and to see people having fun over our culture. Our culture isn't celebrated much so I find joy in seeing it being shared. I'd like to dedicate this to my family and friends as they inspired me to continue forward," said 11-year-old KyMani.

Lazaro, meanwhile, was the lone competitor in the women's division and scored 2 points in a virtual exhibition.

"My win for this competition was very much appreciated, even though I did not have a female opponent this year, it was still a wonderful and exciting competition. It's filled with laughter, joy, storytelling, and cultural elements this overall experience was a great event to be a part of. I highly encourage others to participate next year, for fun and to help keep the sling tradition alive!" she said.

Typhoon Sports Association's Keith Nabors Sr., who organized the event, congratulated his two sons and Lazaro for topping the competition and thanked everyone for keeping the sport of sling alive.

"The competition is more than just a sport; it's a movement. It perpetuates our culture, drawing people of all ages, genders, and skill levels. Amidst the competitive spirit, an atmosphere of camaraderie thrives where everyone cheers for everyone. It offers a safe and inclusive environment, allowing participants to grow, learn, and enjoy the great outdoors," he said.

The elder Nabors hopes that the yearly Tagafest Sling Competition will grow more in the coming years and someday featured in the Micronesian Games.

"The vision for the future is clear: greater participation from islands throughout the Marianas. While the past few tournaments witnessed participants from Luta and Guam, we yearn for broader representation. Imagining each island hosting its competition during their signature festivals or fiestas fills us with excitement. The ultimate dream? Seeing slinging debut in the Micronesian Games or, dare we say, the Olympics."

The 3rd Annual Tagafest Sling Competition was supported by the Tinian Mayor's Office, Power Builders Inc., FPA Construction Company, Joe Raymond "The Weaver" Mangloña, mayor's boys, and the special events staff for logistical support.

KOBES

From page 24

goal, Aveina went on to singe the net at the end of the first half to make it 2-3.

The second half started with just one thing on the Umangs mind: tie it up. Aveina put his best foot forward and equalized the game in no time, 3-3, with a little help at the net by WSR's defenders. When it seemed like it would be a deadlock from that point forward, Kamal came speeding in for his fourth goal of the game to grab the lead once again in the 31st minute, 4-3.

The game was about to end and hand the Kingfishers their second straight championship, but as in anything—it's not over until it's over and Aveina scored the crucial tying goal in the 39th minute to force the finale into a shootout.

Sellem drew first blood as he found a right-hand opening past WSR goalie Hayven Babauta to put them up by one. WSR's Xander Binghit tried to equalize it but was too high and hit the top of the goalpost.

Aveina came in and fired one quickly past Babauta for a 2-0 Umangs lead. It was Kamal's turn. He tried to get at least one PK in past Sellem—and as twilight blanketed the pitch over Koblerville and the supporters' screams broke eardrums on the sidelines, Kamal kicked—and missed.

Sellem and his teammates jumped for joy as the crowd celebrated over the announcement of the championship win for the Umangs over the speakers.

The MVP award of the game went to Aveina with his completed hat-trick and penalty goal.

The Golden Boot awardee was Salman Kamal with the most goals of the season at 21.

Umangs head coach Francis Mendiola said after the finals, "I'm happy for Koblerville Elementary School and the students. They did everything to deserve this—the students really worked hard."

He said he knew that WSR was the favorite to win the champs again this year and said it showed in the regular season and the playoffs. "They outscored everybody. But I told my players, just relax and breathe. A lot of WSR's players played in the championship last year and came back, while we're a rebuilding team."

Mendiola said of the finals game, "We got a goal in the last minute of the first half, so I told them okay, we got the jitters out. We're there. We just got to work together. We know each other—you guys have been playing for the past two months and trust each other. Listen to the coaches on what's the play and lessen the mistakes. The less mistakes you make, you get a better chance of winning."

Umangs went through the ringer as they beat undefeated teams Saipan International School and San Vicente Elementary School. Mendiola said coming to the finals against the also undefeated WSR, he told his students, "They're undefeated for a reason. They're the defending champs. The only way to be the champs is we got to go and push for it. In the beginning, I think the jitters were still there, but I trusted them."

About MVP Aveina, Mendiola said in the beginning, he was actually supposed to be their team's main goalie. "However, we switched it out because we needed more height and speed. Then, Germaya stepped in to be the goalie. I didn't even know Aveina was going to get the MVP. I thought it was going to be WSR's Kamal. I was really shocked by that."

Along with Mendiola, Umangs coaching staff included Joe Etipson, Angie Ruiz, and Joshua Waldo.

Third place went to San Vicente Elementary School Canaries 2 as they blanked Garapan Elementary School Mallards, 2-0, in the first match of the afternoon.

Zayne Reyes and Izaiah Haro collected the goals for the Canaries as the Mallards failed to produce.

GAME-EATS

From page 24

his team—egging Basa to take the lead on the court.

With time winding down quickly, Albert gave Basa the green light for 3-pointers at any opportunity. It was heated on the court as Bridge Capital's knuckles were white from trying to hold on to their narrowing lead with Eats Easy creeping up.

With just two minutes left and one timeout remaining, Eats Easy inched slowly by finally making their free throws and their layups. The minutes went by as Eats Easy was making a comeback from a 67-76 deficit.

With 21 seconds left, Sablan fouled Khristian David who made it both in, but Bridge Capital stagnated at 78 points as rush plays by Eats Easy conjured up crucial fouls from a penalty-ridden Bridge Capital defense. J.R. Galang finally made up for his missed ones earlier in the quarter and made it 77-78.

It was still Bridge Capital's possession and they tried to kill time, but Basa, on a last-ditch effort, fouled White Capalad with 13 seconds left to give Eats Easy the last possession. Capalad, who needed to make both in, missed entirely—which eventually cost them the game as it was Eats Easy's possession with less than 13 seconds left.

Bridge Capital defended their basket mightily, but a jump ball allowed Eats Easy to retain possession, and after a final timeout by Albert, the play was set culminating on Basa's 3-pointer.

In the game after, CK Saints went a different route and won via a blowout 85-59 game against Solid North.

CK Saint's Melvin Manibusan led with his 16 markers, while Dom Blas put up 12, and L.J. Reyes and Leo Galarse had 11 points each.

If the schedule follows through, the master's division semis started last night. The open division semis are set for this Saturday, Oct. 28, and the master's division semis continuation is next Monday, Oct. 30.

LEIGH GASES

An exhausted but happy The Game-Eats Easy crew poses for a photo after their close win against Bridge Capital to advance to the semis of the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court Wednesday night.

The open division semis continuation is on Tuesday Oct. 31, and master's/open semis continuation are on Wednesday, Nov. 4.

The championships for both divisions are set for Saturday, Nov. 4.

The Game-Eats Easy 80 – Galang 21, Basa 18, Ong 12, Gutierrez 9, Mizutani 9, Sablan 6, Ferrari 5.

Bridge Capital 78 – Bernardo 23, Poksu 13, David 11, Lilies 8, Capalad 7, Solis 6, Agustin 6, Gariguez 4.

Scoring by quarters: 14-17, 33-37, 52-61, 80-78.

CK Saints 85 – Manibusan 16, Blas 12, LJ Reyes 11, Galarse 11, Tudela 9, Luizi Reyes 8, Aldan 6, Mendiola 4, Aughenbaugh 4, Palacios 2, Ybanes 2.

Solid North 59 – Foronda 19, Bayking 17, Bobares 8, Leon 7, Jugos 3, Malinay 2, Sapo 2, Gallardo 1.

Scoring by quarters: 26-15, 42-27, 56-51, 85-59.

APPLIANCES

SPEAKERS

MANY SIZES IN STOCK

Hisense

SMART TVS

gemini

LG

GAME SYSTEMS

Nintendo

COMPUTERS & LAPTOPS

hp

Microsoft

99¢ RENTS*

SMARTPHONES

SAMSUNG

TABLETS

SAMSUNG

*Your First Rental Payment

LIVING ROOM SETS

LeatherItaliausa

ASHLEY FURNITURE INDUSTRIES, INC.

Furniture of America

MARTIN SVENSSON Home

DINING SETS

NOCTOVA SLEEP

Sealy

BEDROOM SETS & MATTRESSES

*This is a rent to own transaction. 99 cents pays for your first payment.
Regular rental rates apply thereafter. You don't own the product until all rental payments are completed. Example: $9.95/wk x 12 months=$517.40. Items may be different from pictured. See store for details.

NO CREDIT CHECKS Middle Road 234-RENT | Chalan Kanoa 234-DIAL

DIAL RENT TO OWN & RETAIL

Doncic, Mavs spoil Wembanyama's debut, beat Spurs.

PAGE 19

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Undefeated FMS, ACS lead IT&E boys caging.

PAGE 21

KobES pulls off upset in shootout for soccer title

LEIGH GASES

Koblerville Elementary School championship team poses for a photo with their trophies and their coaches, including Francis Mendiola, back, center, during the awards ceremony after the finals of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Elementary School Soccer League 2023-2024 at the NMI Soccer Training Center Wednesday night.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Koblerville Elementary School Umangs upset defending champs William S. Reyes Elementary School Kingfishers via penalty shootout in the finals of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Elementary School Soccer League 2023-2024 last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Eventual finals MVP Alexander Aveina came through in the clutch with a goal in the final minutes of regulation to tie the game and force a shootout for all the marbles.

Then with two penalty kicks made by Umangs goalie Germaya Sellem and Aveina and none for the Kingfishers, the Umangs clinched the championship, 6-4.

Salman Kamal gave WSR the upper hand first with three unanswered goals for a complete hat-trick by only the 12th minute. But the Umangs came roaring back as they began to chip away at the Kingfishers' lead with their first goal by Vincent Mateo in the 17th minute.

Then Aveina, as the main striker, put his cleats and speed to work as he crumbled WSR's defenses by getting a foothold of the ball as much as he could. While WSR could not find the

See KOBES on Page 22

The Game-Eats Easy, CK Saints advance to open Final 4

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Final Four stage of the open division in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 is set.

The Game-Eats Easy and CK Saints join Easy Riders and Checkpoint in the semifinals of the open division after they eliminated their foes Wednesday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

After being down by 11 points at one point, Eats Easy came back to get within a point, 77-78, with 1.7 seconds left.

LEIGH GASES

CK Saints players pose for a photo before their elimination game against Solid North in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court Wednesday night.

Eats Easy gained possession after a jump ball and Joe Sablan set up the play with J.C. Ferrari screening for Preston Basa to get away from his defender.

Basa went on to get the ball and swooshed a Hail Mary 3-pointer at the buzzer to steal the win away from Bridge Capital LLC, 80-78.

The crowd poured onto the court and Eats Easy's bench made a beeline to congratulate Basa on an almost impossible play.

Eats Easy actually made it harder for themselves as they could've taken the lead in the fourth quarter, but free throws handed to them by Bridge Capital foul penalties were missed on more than one occasion.

Bridge Capital also upped the pressure with man-to-man defense to ensure rushed and inaccurate 3-point attempts by sharpshooter Basa and no-go fast-break under the net plays by speedy DJ Ong and Francisco Gutierrez.

The start of the fourth quarter seemed like Bridge Capital was going to take it all the way with a 61-52 lead. Eats Easy coach Clint Albert could be heard on the sidelines screaming plays at

See GAME-EATS on Page 22

Nabors bros, Lazaro top Tagafest Sling comp

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

You don't want to be caught in the crosshairs of the Nabors family after brothers Keith Jr. and KyMani along with Sienna Lazaro topped last weekend's 3rd Annual Tagafest Sling Competition on Jones Beach, Tinian.

Keith Jr. was champion of the adult division after edging Richard Lazaro in sudden death in the men's division.

Lazaro led after the first round with 4 points, followed by K.J. Nabors with 3 points, Keith Jr., Joe Raymond Manglona, and Peter Ayuyu with 2 points apiece, and Collin Dela Cruz with a point.

Keith Jr. tied Lazaro after two rounds after scoring 3 points including a bull's eye in the next round, while the rest of the field including Cody Dela Cruz and excluding Ayuyu who didn't score, logged a point each.

In the third and final round, Keith and Lazaro mirrored each other with 6 more points that included 2 bullseyes each to finish with 11 total points.

Keith Jr., however, separated himself in the sudden death by ringing the bull three times as well as a board hit to win. Lazaro managed only a point in sudden death. =

"It feels good to keep the sling tradition, not many people on this island really focus a lot on our culture and

See NABORS on Page 22

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants and organizers of the 3rd Annual Tagafest Sling Competition pose for a group photo last weekend at Jones Beach on Tinian.